

# The Nation

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## Events of the Week.

THE Irish outlook is darker than it has been since the crisis that was precipitated by Mr. de Valera's message to the Pope. Ulster has given an emphatic refusal to the Government's invitation to consider a plan for an All-Irish Parliament. On this side then the road is blocked. Sir James Craig stated in the Six Counties Parliament that unless the Government could present an alternative scheme by the following Tuesday, it might be taken that negotiations had broken down, and that Ulster's powers would not be compromised in any way. The Government have since produced a new plan which was to be submitted to the Irish leaders on Thursday. It is believed that under this plan a single Dominion Parliament would be set up for Ireland, and that Ulster would stand aside with her present powers. If this question were the only Irish problem, some such scheme, if supplemented by provision for a *plébiscite* and a Boundary Commission, would probably be the best available plan, because Ulster would soon be driven by her economic interests to reconsider her position.

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BUT there is another problem with which the Ulster problem is not unconnected, the problem of determining the relations of Ireland and England. The Irishmen have a definite idea of the form that relationship should take. They think of Ireland as a sister nation, and are ready for association on this basis. Such an association would imply a recognition of obligations in respect of foreign policy and defence that would satisfy our needs. This is a very definite concession, and when Mr. de Valera says, as he said at Ennis, that Ireland can go no further, it is a strange misreading of the situation to minimize the importance of this offer. This question of status gives its point and significance to the issue of the form of the oath of allegiance. The Irishmen offer to take an oath to the Irish Constitution, as that Constitution will be created by a British Act of Parliament, and the Irish Government's relation to Britain would be explicitly declared. Such an oath, they contend, gives Britain all that she can legitimately ask.

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THIS is a delicate problem, but clearly not insoluble with goodwill and imagination. The British system is the most flexible in the world, and this is the reason

of its vitality. There is no ground for panic over a new form, and the problem should be explored with an open mind. Unfortunately it has been grossly mismanaged on the British side. Sir Gordon Hewart went to Leicester on Friday in last week, and made a rasping and provocative speech demanding allegiance in the strictest form. The Lord Chancellor spoke the next day in a very different tone, but the impression created in Ireland by Sir Gordon Hewart's speech confirmed the view that has lately been growing there that Ministers were seeking some method for exculpating Ulster and picking a quarrel with Ireland. The Wickham circular and the omission of the Government to take any action about it have strengthened the extreme forces and excited widespread suspicion of the British Government's sincerity. Thus all the circumstances have combined to create a bad atmosphere. But one thing is perfectly clear, and that is that Sinn Féin has made concessions of substance in the cause of peace, whereas Ulster refuses all concessions of substance or of form. If the negotiations break down, there can be no question of using force on the issue that remains. The Liberal and Labor Parties would offer the most strenuous opposition to any such policy, with such support from the nation that Ministers would soon discover that they had no longer authority to speak or act for England. Equally on the Irish side, a resort to arms would be an act of wickedness and folly.

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BUT if the negotiations break down, it will be no easy matter to keep the truce in Ireland, unless the armed forces are withdrawn, for there are dangerous elements on both sides. A local encounter might precipitate a general war. For this reason it is essential that there should be a withdrawal, and we are glad to see that Lord Robert Cecil is urging this policy. A strong appeal should be made at once by Churchmen and men of influence in both countries for abstention from violence in any form. In both countries silence has been kept for good reasons during the negotiations, but silence after their collapse must cease. Within the Six Counties the prospects are as bad as they could be. Sir James Craig said in his speech on Tuesday that he was mobilizing the notorious special constables for use not merely in Belfast, but in Tyrone and Fermanagh. The Tyrone County Council has declared its association with the Irish State, and presumably these compact Nationalist districts will be attacked by the Orange Army in the name of order. In Belfast itself there is the usual tale of violence and murder on both sides. Nobody could read Sir James Craig's speech without trembling for the population that is committed to the care of such Ministers. It is not surprising that the R.I.C. show no enthusiasm for the prospect of service under the Six-Counties Government.

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THE biggest event at Washington after the speeches of Mr. Hughes and M. Briand has been the issue of an apparently authorized statement of Mr. Harding's views. He hopes for the frequent and perhaps regular repetition of the Conference, to consider all the outstanding international issues. Indeed, a yearly meeting is hinted at. This periodical Conference might be linked up with an international court of arbitration, to form, not a League, but an Association of Nations. To this, Mr. Harding thinks, Germany should be admitted. The main differ-

ence between the League and the Association would be that the latter would lack any kind of executive, and would not be bound by any authoritative Covenant. It would be an organization of public opinion, a very valuable source of new strength, but its weakness from that standpoint is that it would reflect purely Governmental opinion more absolutely than the League. Clearly, it is not a substitute, for it could not act in an emergency, as the League did the other day when it saved Albania from the Serbs by threatening a boycott. We see, however, nothing to prevent the two organizations from existing side by side—A UNITED STATES OF EUROPE WITHIN A WORLD ASSOCIATION. We deal in a leading article with the importance to European peace of this first welcome sign that America is ready to re-enter European politics, for her salvation quite as much as ours. There seems no other hope of easing the tension of Anglo-French relations.

THE Washington Conference has gone completely underground into secret session. The Japanese still insist on the ratio 10:7 instead of 5:3 between America and themselves, but it is thought that they will give way. Their great anxiety is to preserve the Mutsu, their chief super-Dreadnought and the biggest warship afloat, which Mr. Hughes has consigned to the scrap-heap. The French are still insisting on the ratio 5:3 instead of 5:2, and on more small cruisers and submarines. Very little is known of the Chinese negotiations. The abolition of foreign post offices and some modification of extra-territoriality are decided in principle. It is still uncertain whether Japan will retain her troops in Shantung and Manchuria. The big economic issue, the penetration of foreign capital through railway building and mines, which leads at once to the creation of *de facto* or recognized spheres of interest, does not seem to have been raised, though it is to our thinking the central issue alike for China's independence and for peace. The pious words "open door" merely evade it. Apparently the other dominating issue, the survival of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, has not yet been reached. It is said in Washington that we are more anxious than the Japanese to maintain it, apparently out of anxiety over India. That means, if it means anything, that we fear a *rapprochement* between Japan and Indian Nationalism. After Japan's conduct in China and Korea one may doubt whether any sane Indian would prefer her rule to ours.

WHILE M. Briand is still at sea, the two other possible French Premiers have given the world a taste of their quality. In a brief statement to the Press, couched in the most bitter and implacable language, M. Viviani has protested against Mr. Harding's suggestion that Germany should enter any future conferences held as a sequel to Washington. At Bordeaux ex-President Poincaré has made what is obviously a programme speech and a bid for power. Three sentences sum it up. There must be no new taxes. Germany must be forced to pay. The Entente must be preserved. Thus he seems to oppose M. Briand all along the line. His propositions are, however, mutually incompatible. The Entente cannot be maintained if France remains the implacable creditor of Germany and the defaulting debtor of Great Britain. Moreover, if France will not tax herself, and forces Germany over the brink of the abyss, both will obviously go bankrupt. What M. Poincaré means is apparently only that he thinks M. Briand's habit of isolated action unwise. It is obvious that a big effort will be made to upset M. Briand on his return. We should guess that

M. Poincaré is making a bid for the support of the Anglophil Clemencists. To our thinking the change of persons would be no gain. The only sane policy, as Mr. Churchill boldly said this week, would be a triple entente of Britain, France, and Germany. No French politician who has any hope of office is ready for that.

THE visit of Herr Stinnes to London has been followed by that of Herr Rathenau and Dr. Simons, and there have been consultations with the Chancellor, our Ambassador from Berlin (Lord D'Abernon), Sir John Bradbury, and Sir R. Kindersley—of course over "private business." What is under discussion can only be, firstly, the raising of a loan to enable Germany to pay the instalments of the indemnity due in January and February; secondly, the proposal of a moratorium of two or three years thereafter, and, thirdly, perhaps the reduction or alteration of the London ultimatum terms. The difficulty is increased by the fact that under the Wiesbaden agreement France got more than she was entitled to. We regard the coming of Herr Rathenau, one of the most distinguished and sympathetic political minds in Germany, after that of Herr Stinnes as a good sign. The latter had a plan, but it was a sinister scheme, unacceptable to any type of German progressive, for the creation of a sort of capitalist dictatorship in Germany and the reduction of the Republic itself to a shadow. Herr Rathenau, though he is also a great industrialist, is a man of widely different views, not far removed from those of the Socialist Right. One may infer that Herr Stinnes failed in London, or at least that he did not definitely succeed. On these negotiations turns the question whether Germany will go hopelessly and confessedly bankrupt before the early spring. But there is no sign as yet that France will consent to a moratorium. The "Temps" is against it, and so plainly is M. Poincaré. This, with the Turkish question, will force to an issue the ending or mending of the Entente.

AN outline, in some respects misleading, has reached the Press of the big and interesting scheme which Mr. Frank Vanderlip has elaborated for dealing with Allied debts to America. He was good enough to explain it to us during his stay in London. He holds very strongly that America has a good moral claim to these debts, and that she should enforce it. He sees as clearly that she cannot afford to receive the money herself. These two contradictions lead him to the large-minded solution that America, while insisting that the debt must be paid, and paid to her, should spend it in Europe for productive and cultural purposes. He had remarked (this was said with an irresistible humor) that Governments, which were always able to find money for warships and other destructive purposes, are rarely able to finance productive enterprises. He would, therefore, use the interest and the capital of these debts as a fund out of which all kinds of beneficent schemes of improvement might be financed all over Europe. We gathered that he would give according to the need of each country at a particular moment, and that he did not contemplate any limitation which would oblige him to spend within each country what that country repaid.

THE range of objects which Mr. Vanderlip has in mind is very wide. He might endow research or a university in England. He might help Italy and Austria to become independent of coal by developing their water-supply for electric power. He might build a Balkan railway or a Central European ship canal. He might restore Russian agriculture by providing tractors. He



excludes mere relief and charity from the scheme, and would give only for productive purposes. He thought that little could be spared for some years, but believed that ultimately the fund would be a very big one. Our first thought is to congratulate the author of a startlingly large and generous plan. If America could induce us all to disarm and then apply this scheme, Europe might become once more a habitable continent. Much would depend upon whether the German indemnity could be included with the Allied debts. We are less sure whether the idea of entrusting the whole administration of the fund to American trustees would work satisfactorily. Neglected States would soon begin to complain of American dictatorship. Perhaps an advisory council, nominated by the League of Nations, might be considered. We do not doubt that the American trustees would start with an ideal of impartiality. But we recall the instructive adventures of some of Mr. Wilson's experts in Paris. They were not all proof against flattery. One academic gentleman, in particular, had a long-standing ambition to be a member of the Institute. He got his honor, and France got the Saar.

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THE Belgian general election illustrates, as the German and Austrian elections also did, the stability which an honest proportional system gives to politics. Though the contention was very hot, the shifting of a few seats from the Socialists and Liberals to the Catholics makes no practical difference in the balance of parties. A few women voted as widows or widowed mothers of fallen soldiers, which can hardly be called a decisive admission of the principle of women's suffrage. The outlook is still uncertain, because the real dividing line of race is obscured by the party divisions. On this issue the Catholics are sharply split. The Flemish movement, in spite of German patronage, was immensely strengthened during the war, and that chiefly in the army itself. Since French was the only official language, practically all the staff jobs and the safe posts behind the lines were filled by Walloons, while the Flemings fought and grumbled in Flemish. The result was that Flemish is now recognized as an equal official language with French. But the Flamings wish to go further, and the immediate issue is now the division of the country into two autonomous areas. That would be an easy solution, since the line of linguistic demarcation is a clear and sharp one. But would autonomy be the end? The Walloons have imposed a pro-French and anti-Dutch policy, especially in the matter of the alliance, and there is a tendency in some Parisian quarters to encourage separation, which would mean the annexation of the Walloon country to France. The Flemings are encouraging a *rapprochement* with Holland, but the Dutch by no means welcome the idea of admitting a large Catholic population, which would upset their internal politics.

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LORD READING, replying to a European commercial deputation, has promised that the full power of the Government of India should be employed for the restoration of public order, and two examples of the sterner policy were immediately forthcoming. The city of Lahore and seven districts of the Punjab have been proclaimed under the Seditious Meetings Act, while the Bengal Government has denounced as seditious the Non-Co-operation Volunteer Corps, Hindu and Moslem, which made a surprising display of their power on the day of the Prince of Wales's arrival at Bombay by paralyzing the business of Calcutta. The Prince is now to visit the historic cities of the North-West, after a week passed amid the medieval

splendors of the Indian States, and we may assume that the behavior of the city crowds will reveal the extent to which Non-Co-operation can operate now that Mr. Gandhi has withdrawn from the direction of its aggressive programme. The optimistic bulletins in reference to Malabar continue to be contradicted by the official statistics, the Moplahs being killed in hundreds daily. It has long been manifest that this campaign is involving manœuvres and slaughter beyond anything known in India since the Mutiny, and it is a grave reproach on the House of Commons that the autumn session should have been permitted to pass without the enforcement of a full inquiry. How, we would ask, is it possible for the Prince to visit Southern India with the principal Moslem district of the lower peninsula torn by racial war?

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A good deal of interest has been shown in an article which appeared some weeks ago in our columns, entitled "The Question of Responsibility." A foolish treatment of the same question has been circulated here by a German Clerical, and (need we say?) subjected to an equally foolish criticism by the "Times." The matter cannot now be debated at length, but the most objective view of it we have read is presented by an American historian, Mr. Sidney Fay, in a series of three most illuminating articles, originally contributed to the "American Historical Review." They are thoroughly documented, and undeviatingly fair in tone. Generally, we should say that they acquit Germany of the charge of willing the war, while blaming her for giving Austria a free hand in her Serbian quarrel, a freedom which Bethmann labored too late to withdraw or curtail. They isolate the active villain, the man who, more than any other single personality, brought about the slaughter, in Count Berchtold. That this man deliberately hoodwinked both Sazonov and Bethmann cannot be doubted, just as at a later stage the Russian militarists lied to the well-meaning Tsar and forced on a full mobilization of the Russian Army, which, in turn, provoked the later German mobilization. Bethmann, after his first fatal weakness, did in fact "press the button" to Vienna, not only in the single telegram published by the "Westminster," but repeatedly and urgently. Roughly speaking, the peace-makers were Grey, Bethmann, Sazonov, Tisza (for a time), and the Tsar, with the Kaiser doubtfully poised, but on the whole pacific. The war-makers were Berchtold, foremost in iniquity, and the two Russian Generals, Sukhomlinov and Januskevich, the latter the Chief of the General Staff. That would seem to be the rough truth about the *immediate* origins of the war.

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LANDRU's trial has ended in his conviction, and as the President is unlikely to intervene in favor of such a monster, his execution is almost certain. The procedure was disgusting, though rather fairer than the fearful neurosis which every sensational criminal trial evokes would lead one to suppose. French Courts seem to an Englishman to be sinks of persecuting gossip; but the juries are fairer and more human than our own, and prisoners usually manage to present their case with some effect. Landru had no case to present; he could only retort on the prosecution that if he could not produce every one of his ten vanished victims, neither could they prove that he had murdered them. The circumstantial evidence, if not overwhelming, was sufficient. Still it seemed doubtful whether such beasts as he existed. Well, they do. But it is a pity that more than a dry digest of their trials should be allowed publication.

## Politics and Affairs.

### WANTED, A COUNCIL OF CIVILIZATION.

M. BRIAND'S speech in Washington and the demands of his delegation for submarines and cruisers much above the ration of sea-power assigned to France in the American scheme, carry the mind back to some decisive moments in the history of recent years. We find ourselves recalling the simple yet masterly speech in which Sir Edward Grey moved a hesitating House of Commons to approve our entry into the war, and that not specially on the plea that we had a duty to Belgium, nor yet because our own interests required it, but primarily because we should have found it intolerable to sit inactive on our cliffs and watch the German fleet bombarding the French coast. Seven years have passed since that day. That argument from the value of France to our common civilization cost us the bereavement of millions, an untold loss of wealth and ease, and a disturbance to our entire national life so deep that it has set some of us asking whether we can any longer hope to find food and work in our island for its normal population. The idealistic justification for the war was wrecked by the savage peace of Versailles, and the European landscape stretches before us more cumbered with the barbed wire of frontiers, moral and material, and more laden with armaments, than it was in pre-war days. The France which we esteemed so highly then, and learned to esteem yet more highly for her gallantry and her endurance, has revealed a personality which most of us had forgotten. The quiet and pacific nation that had grown up with us since 1870, great in her literature, her science, her art, and her wit, has reverted, as it seems to us, to type. That period of a calm inner life was accidental, the result of defeat. It had begun, indeed, to end some years before the war when French Nationalism felt sure of Russian and British support. The more permanent national self has re-emerged, and France is once more what she was under the Grand Monarch, under Napoleon, and in the bastard period of the Second Empire.

We do not think that we wrong this France—or perhaps we should say this governing France—when we say that her leading motive is the preservation of her military hegemony over Europe. Ambition, as usual, masquerades as fear. The nation which has added to her own population the allied Belgians, the client Poles, the dependent Tchechs and Serbs and Roumanians, all with their French drill-sergeants and their French purveyors of cannon; the nation which, with every strategical vantage ground in her hands and a European monopoly of heavy guns, keeps under arms eight conscripts to Germany's one, affects to fear the beaten foe. Perhaps she does. But even Napoleon would, when it suited him, profess that he fought incessantly for security. We recall after that day in August, 1914, the other day in November, 1918, when the Allies insisted on disarming Germany so completely that she must needs accept the most impossible of their demands. By so doing they handed to France the dictatorship over the Continent.

More clearly than ever before, the scene is set at Washington for the unrolling of this Napoleonic drama. The Balance of Power is broken. Germany has ceased to be a Great Power: she counts for less on the world stage than Belgium or Bohemia, and the Poles wield six times her allotted measure of force. Austria is shattered and Russia submerged. No effective League of Nations, no sovereign council of justice and representation, has as yet taken the place of the system of

balance. It was costly, precarious, unstable, and yet it preserved Europe from the kind of dictation to which she must submit to-day. Two Powers divide sway in the older world, with Italy as a too modest third. This dualism is impossible. It is bad enough that it leads to incessant friction, jealousy, suspicion, and quarrelling. Each partner seems to succeed only in his more egoistic purposes, and on the whole the trend of their joint government is towards ruin.

But that is not the worst. On our side the jealous tradition which always has bidden us to oppose the Power which aimed at Continental ascendancy reasserts itself. The French are not slow to understand the issue. We realize fully the horror of what we are writing. But what can it mean when the Power already almost omnipotent on land shows, without shame, in the full publicity of Washington, an ambition to be much stronger at sea? Her delegation asks for leave to begin rebuilding after five years instead of ten; to build in the ratio of three against our five, instead of the allotted two; to increase her contingent of small cruisers, and, above all, to enjoy the maximum tonnage in submarines. Against whom but ourselves can she want *all* these preparations? What, asks Mr. Wells, but the sinking of our commerce could be the purpose of these submarines? The question is asked in America, and M. Briand answers with a jest. They are to study marine flora. The inference is that Napoleonic ambitions revive the Napoleonic confrontation of England against France. Land armaments are not enough. M. Briand builds submarines as Napoleon built flat-bottomed boats. It is a more formidable device.

One discerns the drift of history. It stretches out like a long additional act to Hardy's "Dynasts." One can hear the gossip of the Wessex peasants again. Any thoughtful working man in a northern trade union—aye, and his comrade in a Lyons factory—could tell us the remedies. Disarm in earnest. Scrap the debts and the indemnities. Quit the Rhineland. Restore Russia. Enlarge the League of Nations, and let it sit in permanence till it has undone the work of Versailles. We have urged all this for years past, and now the echoes come back from such unexpected quarters as City banks and the Federation of British Industries and the speeches of Mr. Churchill. Anyone can draft a list of aspirations. But how shall we realize them? Where is our technique? France knows what she wants, and she has the military power to secure it. She may crash in the general bankruptcy of Europe, but, even so, need she be greatly weakened? She has corn and iron within her own borders. She can get a tribute of coal. If the franc fell to the level of the mark, she still would have her conscripts, her negroes, and—her submarines. She is nearly independent of the outer world, and that economic self-sufficiency explains her inability to think internationally. Her satellites are in the same case. Poles and Serbs are also nearly self-sufficient. There remains persuasion, but we have no voice. The pompous hints of Lord Curzon will never move her. She is further away from us, less sensitive to our thought, less able to read our language or follow our minds, than any other country in Europe.

We see one remaining hope of averting the consequences of an estrangement which is becoming an enmity. It is, by the frankest of appeals, to bring back America to Europe. We say this without illusions. She is no wiser or more virtuous than the rest of us. By the mere facts of geography and national culture, she is still unfamiliar with European affairs. She is set resolutely on aloofness. She has not begun to understand the politics or the economics of international



debt. Yet she is powerful. She is disinterested, and idealistic in character. She recurs to her traditional hatred of war. If we could put a speech into the Prime Minister's mouth when he goes, as one hopes he will, to Washington, we would urge him to base his frank appeal, not on our virtues, in which no one believes, still less on the vices of our rivals, but on the needs of Europe and the duty of America. She, more than any other, made this situation. She, with her armies and her loans, put omnipotence in our hands. She it was who consented, reluctantly it is true, to stripping the enemy naked on the day he surrendered. If our Premier first talked the knock-out blow, her President made it possible. But for her we should have had a compromise peace. Germany would have remained, though much chastened, a Great Power. There would still have been a Balance in Europe. She quitted us after she had made this situation. She left the two chief victors to face each other on the battlefield. Human nature and the delirium of omnipotence have been too much for them. She must finish her work. We need a third Power in the world's councils. Let her call it League or Association as she chooses. We need what Mr. Harding outlines, a strong, authoritative Council of Civilization.

### THE NEMESIS OF REVOLUTION.

"We believe, and we say plainly, that there are circumstances in the actual situation in Ireland that are OUT OF THE CONTROL OF THE GOVERNMENT, which we could not control if we conceived it to be our duty to attempt to control them, and which MUST DEPEND UPON THERE BEING SOME CENTRAL BODY IN IRELAND which will have authority and power in matters which concern Ireland as a whole. . . .

"We have gone into this matter running great political risks, but we have done it as men who believed it to be their duty and as trustees on behalf of the Government of the Empire. Of the two Irish delegates of whom I have seen most, Mr. Griffith and Mr. Collins, I wish to make it absolutely plain that I have not the slightest doubt as to the sincerity of both these gentlemen, and the genuineness of their desire to reach a solution of our difficulties, if a solution is attainable. Whether it comes now or later, and whether on the lines we have proposed, or upon other and more acceptable lines, one thing is certain—it must come some day. If it does not fall to us to obtain a settlement, the task will fall on other and more competent shoulders. For what is the alternative? It is very easy to say we ought to raise an army and conquer Ireland. If the only means of obtaining peace in Ireland proved to be by force of arms—if that tragic consequence should really ensue—no British Government would shrink. But I would like to ask: When that is attained, and by what expenditure of blood and treasure I do not know, how much nearer would we be to having a contented Ireland? . . .

"In making the present attempt to settle the Irish question the object we have had in our minds, and have never forgotten, has been equally the welfare of Ireland, the security of this country and the maintenance of the Empire."—*The Lord Chancellor at Tunbridge Wells, November 26th.*

MR. ASQUITH referred the other day to the failures of the Die-Hards in history. He did not refer to their one conspicuous success. They failed in 1828, in 1832, and in 1867 for a simple but very important reason. It was agreed among English statesmen that resistance to reform was to stop short of the point at which it would upset the Constitution. No man could have hated the Reform Bill more than Wellington, but much as he hated it, he was not prepared to go all lengths in disturbing the peace and order of the country. A principle as important as any in our constitutional arrangements came into operation when statesmen decided definitely that there were certain weapons that

they would not use, certain methods that were worse than the acceptance of the most uncongenial measure. This and nothing else is the explanation of the quiet and orderly atmosphere in which England has passed through changes that have brought violence and revolution with them in every other great country in Europe.

In the years 1911-1914 this tradition was broken. By all the precedents of our history the principle of Irish self-government had passed from the stage at which a reform can be resisted into the stage at which the real issue is one of details. Home Rule was not a new or sudden plan. In 1893 a Home Rule Bill had been passed by the House of Commons. All the Irish legislation that had been passed had made Home Rule easier and less of an experiment. So strong had been the forces pushing in this direction that a Home Rule movement had sprung up among the more public-spirited Unionists in Ireland, and it was no secret that the Irish Viceroy and the Irish Secretary of a Unionist Government had been drawn irresistibly into it from their study of the problems and influences of Irish life. Before 1914 it should have been obvious to any statesman of perception that it was no more possible to go back on a Home Rule policy than it had been to go back on a Reform policy in 1832. Home Rule had been discussed for forty years: by 1906 no Irish policy was conceivable on any other lines; the electorate accepted it in 1910 and showed no signs of revising its judgment; the statesmanlike course was to remove Home Rule from the province of party questions, to cease opposition to the principle, and to ask for a conference on the details. In this way the Home Rule problem would have been settled in the last resort by peaceful discussion.

If the Duke of Wellington had led the Opposition this course would have been taken. Unfortunately the leadership of the Opposition was in very different hands. The Unionist leaders preferred to raise a revolt, to put arms into the hands of Ulster, to encourage violent resistance, and to seduce the Army from its allegiance. They won. They beat the Government of the day, and they removed the decision of the Irish question from the sphere of statesmanship to the sphere of force. The most important fact in the public life of the British Empire in 1912-1914 was the organization of a strong army, led by Privy Councillors and the responsible leaders of the Opposition, for no other purpose than that of intimidating Parliament and resisting the law. It was at once the triumph of revolutionary opposition and the introduction of a new form of disorder.

De Tocqueville has told us, in his graphic account of the Paris Revolution of 1848, of the talk he had with some of his friends after the fall of Guizot's Ministry in 1848. His friends were in great spirits; he was full of anxious foreboding, for he saw that though his opponents had fallen, their fall was due to military intervention and to forces that were dangerous to France. He warned his friends of the coming revolution. "Oh," said one of them in reply, "you are always a gloomy fellow. Let us at any rate enjoy our victory to-day; we can wait till to-morrow to lament over the results." The very next day the revolution began. Mr. Bonar Law, Sir Edward Carson, and their friends had their victory, and they enjoyed it. The full results did not come the next morning, but they came very soon after. Irish politics were thrown into the world of conflict; violence learnt that it was the master, and the Irish problem, difficult under the best conditions, was rendered almost insoluble. For whereas Ulster had a genuine claim to consideration, the right to expect protection for her local liberties, she was now treated, just because of her threat of violence, as if her merest wish was law. The Act of

1920, which laid it down that an Ulsterman was to count for three times as much as an Irishman of the twenty-six counties in the decision of their common affairs, was the recognition by law of the doctrine on which British Ministers and British soldiers had acted since Mr. Bonar Law's revolutionary triumph. In the war Ulster alone was allowed to say whether or not her guns should be removed, when her army should cross the seas, and what promises should be made to Sir Edward Carson before she took the field.

The full results we reap to-day. Ulster could save the situation if she would budge. She refuses. She snaps her fingers at the Empire, prepares to raise an Orange Army for a domestic civil war, and claims everything that was implicitly given her in the perverse Act of 1920. Her leaders, not one of whom made the slightest mark in the British Parliament, indulgent as it is to mediocrity, have been thrust by the amazing deference shown by British Ministers to the violence of 1912-1914 into a greatness that would be merely ridiculous if it were not so grave a danger to the Empire. Ireland learnt the lesson of Ulster's success, and she has been swept by all the passions, heroic and base, noble and cruel, that fire a people violently conscious of its history and its wrongs. Meanwhile, the world has been transformed; new dangers have arisen, and the Lord Chancellor's speech last Saturday is a plain warning to his party that an Irish peace is essential to the maintenance of the Empire, and even that we have no longer the main decision in our hands. Ireland, he says, cannot be governed without an All-Ireland Parliament. That means that the British Government of Ireland has determined.

Politicians of all parties should have recognized ten years ago that the question of Irish self-government was no longer open, and that to follow the ordinary motives of party, at all costs to the State, would entail all the evils from which Wellington shrank in 1832. To-day politicians of all parties must recognize that the question of granting Ireland her full freedom is no longer open, and that, as the Lord Chancellor says, somehow, sooner or later, peace has to be made on this basis. If the present negotiations come to nothing, new negotiations must be started. There can be no question of making war on an Ireland that is ready for relations of friendship. Force, military or economic, is unthinkable. We must keep the truce going, withdraw our soldiers and police, and work for the day when informal peace will be followed by a regular settlement. And so long as this is the policy of the Government, it will be supported by all responsible men in the country. We notice that Lord Robert Cecil has observed that he was doubtful about the wisdom of starting negotiations, but that he thinks that everything should be done now to ensure their success. It seems to us incredible that any statesman who cares for England's place and influence in the world could last July prefer the alternative of war to that of negotiation. To-day the issue is seen clearly and put boldly by the Lord Chancellor; it is peace or the dissolution of the Empire.

### A LIBERAL INDUSTRIAL POLICY.

We are glad to see that the Liberal social and industrial policy has been endorsed by the delegates of the National Liberal Federation at Newcastle by a large and apparently enthusiastic majority. It deals with a variety of social reforms, many long overdue, in connection with unemployment, the land in town and country, the control

of monopolies, and the like. But it is evident that far the most important of its proposals is concerned with the future of industrial organization. That organization is at present in chaos. And the chaos is largely responsible both for the limitation of production and the high prices of the things produced. If those prices are maintained, they must result in the ruin of our commerce. Various suggestions are being made for the removal of this imminent evil. At the one extreme is an attempt to maintain things as they are, or rather as they were before the controls introduced by the war. This merely means allowing men and masters to resume an unending industrial warfare, with all the dismal accompaniments of strikes and lock-outs, passions and hatreds, and final appeals to Downing Street. It is a process in which, whether men or masters win for a time, the nation as a whole must always lose. For even if the men are driven back to work by hunger, it is quite possible for them to limit their production. There may be little isolated centres in which the best tradition of the eighteenth century still obtains, and benevolent employers carry on efficient work with grateful employees, undisturbed by trade disputes. But that is the relic of a former England, never destined to return. The course of events here and throughout the world has created massed production by great "cartels" or combines of employers' organizations on the one side and great trades union organizations on the other. The employer who thinks he can return to what is sometimes called "private enterprise" is living in a world of dreams.

Nor is there any likelihood of the people of this country adopting the extreme ideals of another school, and placing all industry under the bureaucratic control of a State-regulated system. The experience of the war alone has killed this conception for a generation at least. The stories told, alike by employers and employed, of some of its results are almost incredible in their record of fatuity, of waste, and of injury to the public good. The attempt at the minute regulation of the industrial life of England by Government officials has been practically abandoned by the Labor Party itself, and is never mentioned in its by-election programme. Nor does "Guild Socialism," the attempt to run great export industries by the men themselves, employing managers, evoke enthusiasm amongst any who know in practical affairs how hardly workmen can treat their own nominees and leaders. On the other hand, there were some fine examples of a freer form of organization, such as the Wool Control Board, which was a great success, and which may well form the model of further experiments.

Therefore in considering the future of industry progressive Liberalism has looked in the direction which promises efficiency. It is a system which is mainly responsible for Germany's commercial successes, achieved in face of the appalling conditions of failing currency, foreign invasion, and civil war, under which she is laboring. It is a system of combined "horizontal" and "vertical" control. It would eliminate much of the old competition, but while effecting the organization of all the great staple trades into bodies of employers and employed, it aims at developing the highest kind of production within the unified concern. It proposes that the councils representing both employers and employed in any trade shall, in agreement, fix the standards of industry in that trade as regards wages, hours of work, and conditions of labor. When such agreements are made, they shall be reported to a National Industrial Council, consisting of representatives of employers, employed, and the community, and, if approved by such a Council, laid



before Parliament. If not rejected, they will have the force of law.

Beyond this the National Industrial Council is to be encouraged to consider and make recommendations upon questions affecting the general problems of industry. These cover practically the whole industrial field: the increase of production, the proportionate reward of labor when the returns to capital are either on the increase or the decline, methods for the collaboration of workpeople of all grades, and for the fair division of the product of industry. There are also suggestions that such a Council might be used to examine cases, and if necessary to recommend, support for any individual or trade associations which may desire to start enterprises on their own account, with managers responsible to the workers instead of employers responsible to shareholders.

It will thus be seen that this scheme rests on three accepted Liberal ideas. The first is to bring the employers into such relations that any standard of life and wages upon which they are able to agree with the men shall not be undercut by other employers who may desire to reject and perhaps destroy that standard. The second is that wages and conditions of labor shall be fixed by agreement, variable from time to time; but only variable when both parties agree, and variable only by the acquiescence of Parliament. For example, under such conditions it would be quite possible in any industrial crisis for employers to forgo profits on condition that employees agree to reduce wages or work longer for the time that the crisis lasts. And the third principle is that the consumer shall be protected, first by representation on the Industrial Council, and second by the ultimate decision of the High Court of Parliament, from

any attempt artificially to raise prices by agreement between both parties in a trade in which excessive profits and wages are obtained to the detriment of the whole nation.

This scheme of industrial organization may not appear deliberately sensational. It has nothing so stimulating as a system of "a token payment of terminating validity" by which Capitalism can be ultimately destroyed. It does not assume even the termination of Capitalism, although it encourages a standard of wages and life, a fairer distribution of the profits of industry, and a better association of the men working in any industry in the actual operation of the work in which they are engaged. In some trades, indeed, such as the iron and steel trade, which has had no strike for sixty years, under a recognized trade agreement, or the cotton trades, where agreement rather than industrial war has been characteristic of the last few years, the new system could be accepted with comparatively little change from present conditions. In other less highly organized occupations, and especially those where the past few years of bitterness on both sides, and vacillating, futile, and often disingenuous action on the part of the Government, have produced universal distrust of it, the difficulties of establishing the new method might be found greater. It is confessedly a system in which Liberalism contemplates a kind of experimental compromise within the lifetime of a generation, and its actual working may demand modification and enlargement. But in a world of perpetual change Liberalism may conceive it wise to look no further forward than a generation. And in that light it seems to be well worth a trial.

## SKETCHES OF MODERN CHINA.

### I.—THE FEAST AND THE ECLIPSE.

By BERTRAND RUSSELL.

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CHINA is traditionally a land of leisure, but the visiting foreigner must not hope for much personal experience of this side of Chinese life. The busiest thirty hours I ever spent in my life were spent in Chang-sha, a city which is reached by travelling up the Yangtze for three or four days from Shanghai to Hankow, and then going south for another day across a vast lake. (In spite of its remoteness it is a Treaty Port.) When I arrived in Chang-sha, there was an educational Congress in session, at which all kinds of people lectured on all kinds of subjects. During my thirty hours I gave four lectures and two after-dinner speeches, and attended a great reception at the American hospital. My lectures, which were on Russia, displeased the students by being somewhat critical of the Bolsheviks, whom almost all Chinese students passionately admire. I spent the night (in a Chinese hotel), as Saint Paul spent his time in Ephesus, fighting with wild beasts. So on the whole my impression of Chang-sha was lacking in Oriental calm.

The proceedings ended with a great feast given by the Tuchun, the military governor of the Province of Hunan. Most Tuchuns are wicked; indeed they are the chief internal source of trouble in China. They intercept the provincial revenue and spend it on raising private armies; they indulge in war, one against another; and they practise depredations in the style of Verres. A British missionary, for many years resident at Chang-sha, assured me that the predecessor of our host had, in

two years, amassed a fortune of thirty million dollars, partly by downright robbery and partly by debasing the currency in his province. At the end of that time he had fled from popular vengeance, with his plunder, to Japan, where, I gathered, he is living happily ever afterwards. An Englishman not accustomed to China might expect to find, in consequence of this worthy's activities, such scenes of desolation as are now to be seen in Eastern Europe, but he would be agreeably disappointed. The city seemed prosperous, and its inhabitants seemed happy; to a superficial eye, there was nothing to show the harm that had been done. Chinese scoundrels have still much to learn from the West as regards efficiency in evil, and it was clear that the absconding Tuchun had done far less harm than is done by the "honest" Governments of the Great Powers. The Chinese Government does some harm to its own people, but none to anybody else; from an international point of view, it is the best Government in the world, because it is the most inefficient.

However, the Tuchun who was our host was an exception to the general rule, being perfectly virtuous and a great friend of education. (He fell a few weeks after my visit.) The guests were received in one vast hall, and banqueted in another. The food was European; there was an endless succession of courses and an infinite variety of wines. Our host, through an interpreter, apologized to me for the frugal fare he was offer-

ing in his humble abode, but said he thought we would rather have a glimpse of every-day Chinese life than be treated to a display of pomp and splendor. I tried to remember quickly all I had read of Chinese etiquette, and mumbled something about my pigship being honored that His Magnificence should deign to notice me; but I fear I was not very adequate.

If the Tuchun displayed something of traditional Chinese manners, the after-dinner speeches differed from those of Europe in the opposite direction, by being free from make-believe and humor, very serious and very businesslike. Professor Dewey spoke of Chinese education and of the lines along which it should progress; Mrs. Dewey informed the dignitaries of Chang-sha that in some provinces co-education had been adopted, and that Hunan ought to do likewise. To this the Tuchun made a statesmanlike reply, promising that the matter should receive his best consideration, and that action should be taken when the time was ripe. Various Chinese educationists, whose speeches were interpreted into English by Chinese interpreters, spoke of their aims and their efforts, and of what they hoped from their European and American guests. Reverence for sages is traditional in China, and many modern Chinese transfer this attitude to the educationists who come from foreign countries. Their expectations are so far beyond one's powers as to be often embarrassing; it is very difficult to explain that one is not a sage without feeling that one is rather a fool.

The educationists and the students in China are extraordinarily keen, and there is no doubt that the movement for modern education represents the most solid advance that is being made. The Chinese who have been at foreign universities do not become unbalanced, or unable to see what is good in China (except in art). Their native civilization is sufficiently strong and solid to enable them to assimilate what the West has to teach without becoming simply Europeans; and, strange to say, they like our best better than our worst. They are, as a rule, less learned than Japanese professors, but more genuinely cultivated, more open-minded, more capable of a scientifically sceptical outlook. Nationalism and religion, the two great enemies of honest thought in the West, are absent from the educated classes in China; respect for Confucius is not excessive among those who have assimilated Western culture. I was never conscious in China, as one almost always is in Japan, of a barrier to mutual comprehension. The Oriental is said to be inscrutable and remote, but this is certainly not true in China. I found the Chinese just as easy to talk to as the English, and just as easy (or as difficult) to understand psychologically.

But Young China has to contend against a terrible dead-weight of ignorance and superstition in the mass of the people. When I left the banquet to go on board the boat on which I was leaving Chang-sha, it happened that an eclipse of the moon was in progress. As in the earliest annals of Chinese history, the streets were full of people beating gongs to frighten away the Heavenly Dog who was supposed to be trying to eat up the moon; little bonfires were being lit everywhere to rekindle the moon's light by sympathetic magic. The missionary whom I mentioned earlier told me that often, as he walked about, he had heard passers-by express astonishment that he could bend the knee, because he was a "foreign devil," and devils have to keep their knees always straight. They also can only travel in straight lines, and therefore every Chinese house has the front door opening on to a blank wall, with the courtyard round the corner. Even within the courtyard, a screen provides other corners, so that at worst the evil spirits cannot get

beyond the servants' quarters. Great care has to be taken in putting up telegraph wires to prevent them from pointing straight at any man's house, because if they did they would help devils to get at him. There are innumerable superstitions of this kind, some merely picturesque, others very inconvenient. Educated people do not believe them, but they have to be respected in any public undertaking. Until recently, no house could be built of more than one story, for fear of disturbing the spirits of the wind and the air.

The only cure for these superstitions is universal education, and for that, at present, there are not enough funds or enough modern teachers. But the love of education and respect for it are so great that one may hope to see it rapidly extended, provided political troubles can be sufficiently settled for the money to be forthcoming. I hope that, when education becomes more widespread, it will be in the hands of the Chinese themselves, not in those of missionaries, clerical or lay, who want to spread our civilization as the finest thing on earth. China has shortcomings, which to us are very obvious, but it also has merits in which we are deficient. What is to be hoped is not that China should become like ourselves, reproducing our Napoleons and Bismarcks and Eminent Victorians, but that a new civilization should be developed, combining our knowledge with Chinese culture. The Chinese are capable of this, if they are encouraged but not coerced. The methods of Europe and Japan would force them in time to become like Japan, militaristic, imperialist, and brutal; the methods of America would persuade them to become like America. But if their development can be left free, I think they can give the world a new civilization, to carry on the arts and sciences after Europe has perished in a sea of blood.

(To be continued.)

## A London Diary.

LONDON, THURSDAY.

"I HAVE read Herr Briand's speeches," said a German the other day. "Our own Kaiser never said anything worse." If indeed it be a feat to have wiped out Germany as the enemy of peace, and put France in her place, the French statesman must be held to have accomplished it. Silesia, the Saar, the Ruhr, the Belgian Treaty, the Franklin-Bouillon agreement, the militarization of Poland, the arming of Roumania and the Turk, the Black Terror in the Rhineland, and the blacker shadow of a war of color, an anti-British propaganda stretching from Paris to Prague, and now this submarine policy—avowed in a cynical jest—make a tolerable contribution to the re-barbarizing of Europe. Imperialist France, says Mr. Radek, is the "father of the Russian famine." If French statesmen had had their will, they would have spread its desolation over half the rest of the Continent. Seven years ago Britain saved her from a German occupation of Paris. To-day, if there is a city in Europe where we are worse spoken of than in any other, it is the French capital. Now M. Briand would make us put Cherbourg or Calais in the category of fear in which we used to place Zeebrugge or Ostend. One asks whether the malice and the folly of the political mind could go much further. The exchange of such a France for the placable Power of the 'seventies and 'eighties and 'nineties may well make the average Briton ask why, if the peace was



to be a pact of ambition and revenge, our statesmen should have stripped Germany of her arms, and laid Europe bare to the scourge of a new Napoleonism.

CLEARLY from that ensanguined path some way of speedy retreat must be found. One wishes many things. One wishes that America had paid more heed to her responsibility for the Treaty of Versailles. One regrets the little wisdom of the men who, when France might have been won for peace, lacked the generosity to give her a lead. And one measures the need of the two countries with the poverty of their representative men. In parties there seems little hope. Our Liberals are too weak, and our Labor Party too inexperienced; while French Socialism lies half-foundered—split on the rock of the Third International. The war demobilized the Christian Church so completely that one hardly sees it coming into action in our lives again. I see but one force of rescue. The writers and the thinkers are at least awake. There is a conscience of the intellectuals, already deeply exercised during the war. It is time to sound its alarm in the ears of the people.

FOR indeed there is light in this extreme darkness, if only it can be focused in time on the conscienceless political scene. I heard the other day a vivid description of a town's meeting called in connection with the League of Nations. All parties were there on the platform—Labor leaders cheek by jowl with Liberals and Conservatives, Churchmen with Nonconformists. The great hall was packed, and when Lord Robert Cecil appeared, the audience rose in a body and gave him a welcome that no other public man in the country would have received from such a gathering. He spoke without rhetoric, but with extreme earnestness, his main point being a recital of the work of the League and a strong insistence on the power accruing to it through the existence of a public opinion to which the leaders of its councils were able to appeal. The impression was profound. Here and elsewhere belief in the League, my friend thought, was becoming a religion, which would gradually transform the political mind and create a working internationalism.

THERE is another ground for hope. It is a good wish for France that she may realize in time that she is in a state of moral isolation. So far as the United States is concerned that, I am assured, is what has happened. Briand's gesture of defiance recoiled instantly on American opinion, and if any French statesman cherished a belief in further political or financial support from America, he must have abandoned it. French military figures are still paraded, but they excite no emotion. At a meeting nominally called to present Foch with the freedom of Chicago, his presence at the Opera House was almost ignored. The war over, the American mind reverts to its familiar strain of idealist pacifism, while its more cultivated intelligence has read the story of Versailles with an awakened perception of where its true moral lies. Above all, America wants a restoration of the European markets, realizes the obstacle, and works for its removal. If I am not mistaken, she is a warm sympathizer, if not an active promoter, of the policy of the moratorium for Germany.

THE "Daily Mail" has been well served for its folly in cashiering Mr. Wells (who was not its servant, but the "New York World's") by seeing him snapped up by the much abler and more enterprising "Express." It is just like the Northcliffe Press to come a cropper

whenever a call is made on it to rise above trade journalism and show a little pluck and public spirit. The firm which dared not publish the Lansdowne letter, only to see it jumped at by the "Daily Telegraph," might have been trusted to funk Mr. Wells as soon as he began to say, in his vivid, biting manner, what so many were thinking. Mr. Wells's despatches were being universally read. They were the journalistic hit of the hour. And, hard as they read, they did good. In the height of their success, and on the eve of M. Briand's cynical witness to the truth of Mr. Wells's famous cablegram, the "Daily Mail" drops them. What editing! But that is always the trouble with the "Mail" and its consorts. They can run their dolls' show for the children of Vanity Fair; but grown-up brains terrify them. Save Mr. Steevens, whose work in the early "Mail," though good, was slight, they have never retained a first-rate writer. Mediocrity, with its head in a bag, is good enough for them. The result is that their journals have never approached the American model, either in ability or in influence.

I HAPPENED to hear the other day (torture would not induce me to say where) a speech, or rather a series of speeches, by Mr. Krassin, the head of the Russian Delegation. I won't describe them further than to say that though they were spoken privately, they might have been delivered on any progressive platform in Britain and listened to with profound interest and no little approbation. Their special attraction for me lay not merely in the speaker's skill of mind and address—both were conspicuous—but in their mastery of practical economics. We have tried to produce a form of business statesmanship. It hasn't been a great success, chiefly, I think, because its exponents possessed too little of the statesman's mind and too much of the business one. Krassin is obviously a "business" man, but his intelligence is addressed less to the detail of production than to the problem (unsolved as yet) of how to produce. I have no idea how much of the Krassin type exists in Soviet Russia. Perhaps not a great quantity. But in the event of there happening to be a surplus, I should be disposed to suggest an exchange of it for some political goods of which this country happens to have a rather large unusable stock on hand.

I VENTURE to quote this passage from my diary in THE NATION of July 28th, 1917:—

"The emancipation of Belgium is in sight. No matter; *the war must go on*. The German democracy, enlightened by its visit to Stockholm, is seen to be moving, and to be drawing the new German Chancellor within its orbit. *The war must go on*. The competing peace formulas are coming together, until they almost reach the American and the Russian embodiments of them. *The war must go on*. The peril of a German mastery of Europe—military, economic, political—has disappeared. *The war must go on*. The Russian Revolution may perish in the absence of a reasonably early peace, and the war for liberty extinguish the greatest work of liberty of our times. *The war must go on*. The armies and the peoples want peace. *The war must go on*. Millions of boys have been killed or mutilated for life. *The war must go on*. There is grave danger of a food shortage in 1918. *The war must go on*. It is urgent to arrange within a measurable period a scheme for the supply and control of the world's raw materials. *The war must go on*. Europe is already within sight of industrial and financial trouble hardly distinguishable from revolution. *The war must go on.*"

A PARABLE in doggerel:—

Where the vintage was gathered, I never could tell:  
Some say on the slopes of the wooded Moselle,  
While others averred that the marvellous *clôs*

Was first kissed by the sun on a plain of Bordeaux;  
Others swore it was golden, and grew by the Rhine,  
But all vow'd its bouquet and color divine.  
Said the Lord of the vineyard: "This fountain of bliss  
Shall be stored like the kingliest wine that it is.  
So build me a tun of magnificent girth,  
To hold, for its ripening, the treasure of earth."

So there flocked to the palace from East and from West,  
Of the makers of wine-casks the sagest and best;  
A band of old tinkers from hoary Vienna,  
With a Foreman supplied by the Prince of Gehenna;  
From Paris, from Pete's town, from London and Berlin,  
Came workers in wood as crafty as Merlin.  
And they hammered and sawed and fitted and faced it,  
And midway of the mightiest cellarage placed it.

Then in trooped the varlets by thousands and poured  
In the tun's vasty belly the draught of the Lord;  
And lo! the stream rush'd to the floor and the sod,  
Till it looked more like blood than the gift of the god.  
And the Fool\* shook his bauble, and shouted: "Why,  
rot 'em,  
The staves are all burst and the thing's got no bottom!  
Would you save the world's wine, then awake from your  
stupor;  
Away with these bunglers, and send for the Cooper!"

Then a Presence stepped in; and straight to men's  
seeming,  
The light in the hall changed from winking to beaming.  
What he looked like? A touch of the sober-side Quaker,  
The bright glance of Shelley—or any song-maker—  
The brow of old Kant, the grin of Voltaire,  
The bagman's brisk port and his common-sense air,  
And as Laughter's the nestling, first-born, of Love's meinie,  
A grim smile from Swift and a gay one from Heine;  
Last, a medicine for souls, surpassing Hippocrates',  
In a gleam from the wrinkled goat-visage of Socrates.

And then, wrought to something that drew from the Whole,  
New bread for man's body, new drink for his soul,  
A ray from the Vision; a hint of the Plan—  
The face of the thorn-crown'd, the crucified, Man.

And a voice like a breath from the wings of a Dove,  
"Would you drink of earth's wine, you must store it in  
Love."

A WAYFARER.

## Life and Letters.

### EINSTEIN ON EDUCATION.

A GREAT man is seldom willing to admit that he is really *sui generis*; he may concede that he is better than other men, but not that he is fundamentally unlike them. Mathematicians are, perhaps, more open than any other class of man to the suspicion of being freaks, and it is not an altogether unrelated fact that most mathematicians are prone to explain away the lack of mathematical ability in other people by roundly abusing mathematical education as it is understood in schools. The normal man, we are given to understand, is a mathematician—of a mild type, certainly—and the conspicuous ignorance and dislike of mathematics he ordinarily exhibits are due merely to the extremely unintelligent way in which he has been taught. The glaring incompetence of this part of education often excites the mathematician to reflect on education in general, although, for the most part, the reforms he suggests apply only to the teaching of mathematics. The fact that Einstein has decided views on education, therefore, need mean no more than that he shares a failing common to his type; when we come to study his views, however, we find that they are both original and important, and, further, that they are related in a very interesting way to the character of his genius.

\* See Tolstoy's "Ivan the Fool."  
† Cobden.

The extraordinary thing about Einstein is his capacity for reflection. He seems able to free himself from assumptions which, to most people, are so deep as to be unconscious. In the words of Poincaré's description of him, he "sees all conceivable possibilities when he is confronted with a physical problem." It is inevitable, therefore, that Einstein finds himself in a world where people are most remarkably unable to reflect. He continually finds that people make assumptions which need not be made. There are logicians who live in a state of angry amazement at the world's insensitiveness to the laws of thought. Einstein lives in a state of mild bewilderment at the world's credulity. The logician points out that an argument does not follow; Einstein points out that it need not begin. Since people are so abnormally unreflective, it must be, of course, that their education is responsible. And here Einstein sounds, we think, very plausible. He points out that the dominant feature of present-day education lies in the importance it attaches to memory. The whole apparatus of both humanistic and scientific studies exists, Einstein thinks, chiefly to train the memory. The scheme of education he propounds, therefore, differs fundamentally from the present system in this point. Always it is the reflective faculties that are to be stimulated; the whole method of education is to be directed to this end. As a preliminary step, examinations are to be abolished. As another step, boredom is to be abolished. Scientific subjects are to be preferred to linguistic studies primarily because they lend themselves better to developing the reflective faculties. But if the student is to reflect he must be interested. And here Einstein, to those who know him only as the most abstract of abstract reasoners, becomes a little unexpected. He asserts that our present education is far too concerned with abstractions. Consider geometry: "words and chalk-marks" are used, says Einstein,\* to instil in the pupil conceptions of dimensions, of angles, perchance of some trigonometrical function. How unintelligent! Give the boy a stick and turn him loose in a meadow or the school-yard. There will be buildings which cast shadows; the stick casts a shadow. The shadows are related to the dimensions of these objects and to the altitude of the sun. A wealth of simple geometrical relations is here involved, and the normal boy, in the open air and encouraged to *experiment*, will stand a chance of feeling that "thrill of pleasure" which Einstein thinks the normal accompaniment of mathematical studies.

"In the matter of physics," says Einstein, "the first lessons should contain nothing but what is experimental and interesting to see." All early education, he thinks, should appeal directly to the senses, and in this connection he attaches great importance to the cinematograph. Geography lessons should be in the nature of pictorial tours. Accelerated and retarded films should illustrate such things as the growth of a flower and the beating of an insect's wings. Also, spectacular but expensive physical experiments might be shown on the screen. And it must be borne in mind that Einstein will not ask the students to remember any of these things; there will be no examinations. It is certain that the pupils will remember what interests them; Einstein does not ask them to remember on any other terms. The most important branches of modern technical industry can be made accessible, he thinks, in the same way. There would be cinematograph views of a power-station or a locomotive, the making of a newspaper, a book, or colored illustrations. But the pupils would not spend all their time in looking at cine-

\* "Einstein the Searcher." By Alexander Moszkowski.



matograph views or in measuring meadows: there is also the workshop. Einstein demands compulsory practical work. "He should be able to choose for himself which it is to be, but I should allow no one to grow up without having gained some technique, either as a joiner, book-binder, locksmith, or member of any other trade, and without having delivered some useful product of his trade." His reason for this is characteristic. Its use to the student is that it makes "more solid the foundation on which he will rest as an ethical being." This programme represents all that Einstein thinks is really desirable; it can be covered, he thinks, in a school day of four hours, with two hours' home-work, and he suggests that this day of six hours be regarded as an absolute maximum.

If there are subjects, such as his chief bugbear, "Universal History," which cannot be included, they are to be thrown overboard. His interest in history, as taught in schools, is of the smallest, and he has very little more in Latin and Greek. But he admits, with urbane fair-mindedness, that there may be individuals who really have a "special interest in what are called *humaniora* by the educationist"; the road should be made smooth for such; they may even be relieved from other tasks which "oppress or alarm" them.

Einstein has views, of course, on the education of women, but women would probably find his attitude too studiously polite to be really agreeable. They should have all facilities, he agrees, but he does not expect to be very interested in the results. "I am referring," he remarks, "to certain obstacles in woman's organization which we must regard as given by Nature." Increased knowledge and an increase in the number of talented women he regards as very probable. But these, he points out, are "quantitative assumptions." To infer that there will be a rise in quality, "reaching to genius," appears to him "very bold." This pessimism is probably due to the fact that Einstein chiefly values a capacity for reflection, and the dazzling examination successes to which modern women have accustomed us leave him comparatively indifferent. His views on education, unexpected at first sight, are really quite consistent with his own particular genius. He is scornful of the teaching which begins with definitions and abstract terms, and he, surely, has a right to be. For it is precisely by reflecting on definitions we had all taken to be incontestable that Einstein has revolutionized modern thought.

## Letters to the Editor.

### THE INDEPENDENCE OF EGYPT.

SIR,—Owing to the gross confusion which has—from time to time—found a way into the Press regarding the Egyptian Nationalist Party, I deem it my duty as its Virtual President to define in a nutshell to the British public the position of the Party, its principles, and its policy. Conscious as I am of the great pressure on your columns, I hope you will kindly grant space for the following.

The present Egyptian Nationalist Party was founded by my brother, the late Mustapha Kamel Pasha, who became known to the British public especially at the time of the Denshawi affair. On his death in 1908 he was succeeded by the late Mohammed Bey Farid, who died in Berlin two years ago.

The Party has a directing Committee of thirty members, nine of which form the Executive. The members represent the best elements in Egyptian society.

The principles of the Party are "Complete independence

for Egypt and the Sudan and their dependencies, without condition or restriction."

Its policy is to negotiate with no British Administration—regarding Egypt—until Britain has recognized officially and internationally the principles of the Party: first, by evacuating all Egyptian territory as it existed in the time of the late Khedive Ismail Pasha; and secondly, by renouncing the Protectorate, which was arbitrarily declared in 1914 on the plea that it was a military necessity, and remains unsanctioned by the Egyptian people.

British diplomacy, whether represented by officers of the Crown or publicists, stigmatized the Party as a group of extremists, and confused it with Zaghloul Pasha and his followers, who neither profess our principles nor pretend to adopt our policy. In contradistinction, the Egyptian Cabinet and its adherents have been called the Moderates. In my opinion this distinction is superfluous, inasmuch as the most unenlightened Englishman knows of one, and only one, true Nationalist principle, namely, "Freedom or death, and that independence is invaluable."

This applies to Egypt, in which exist but two categories of men. The educated believe that independence is incomplete without elimination from all Egyptian territory of all foreign troops, and full representation in foreign countries. To the ordinary man in the street, on the other hand, the visual symbol of independence is the liberation of the fatherland from foreign troops.

Where then, sir, is the delegation, the party, or the leader who could convince the Egyptian people of their independence while British troops were still in occupation even of a square inch of Egyptian soil, and while representation abroad was only hypothetical?

No, sir! Nobody can establish in one and the same land independence and foreign occupation. It is physically impossible, unless it be the new meaning of "freedom" as it exists in the vocabulary of British diplomacy!

Every unbiased Englishman admits that Britain's entry into Egypt was in no worthy manner, and it has now become incumbent on her to leave Egypt for Egyptians and withdraw with honor from the country, especially after her repeated pledges and promises to effect that evacuation. The moment when Britain could with honor have fulfilled her pledges was offered three years ago, and even yet Britain could make use of it. It is the moment for the recognition of the principles of the Nationalist Party, which have now permeated the entire people of Egypt.

British diplomatists declare their readiness to recognize Egypt's demands provided the necessary guarantees for the protection of British interests were given. Others point out that by the guarantees British diplomacy means such as shall safeguard the Imperial communications; while still others assert that Britain is responsible for the safety of foreigners in Egypt. These, we believe, are distortions of facts.

If the security of "Imperial communications" entitles Britain to occupy Egypt and rob her of its freedom and independence, then all countries lying athwart these communications might as well give themselves up to Britain; France and Italy and others, for the sake of these communications, should be rendered vassals to Britain! On the other hand, if by communications Britain means the Suez Canal, it must be pointed out that that waterway is international, and therefore the interests of all nations are equal. However, if Britain entertains any fears that a foreign Power might occupy Egypt after evacuation and attack the Canal, it might be borne in mind that the only aggression on record on Egypt since the opening of that waterway was that made by Britain, and Britain only, in 1881. Therefore, if there be any prospective aggression on the Canal it will not be from any other Powers, but from Britain herself, who was the first to attack it twelve years after it had been opened for traffic.

The security of foreigners in Egypt cannot constitute the right of a British army to occupy the country, since these foreigners are protected by their respective Governments and armies, who must see to their safety, not only in Egypt, but also in Britain herself.

If, notwithstanding, Britain be still apprehensive, she can, indeed, take adequate measures in conjunction with

France and Italy, the two Powers with which she probably reckons in future owing to their geographical propinquity to Egypt. These measures could translate themselves into a triple pledge to respect the complete independence of the Nile Valley. There is already a precedent in the case of Greece, whose independence was guaranteed by Britain, France, and Russia. It is to be remembered that it was in the name of that pledge that the Allied armies during the war occupied Salonica and deposed King Constantine.

In conclusion, it must be recorded here that we entertain no enmity or bitterness towards the British people, but we are enemies of injustice—enemies of those who forgot their solemn pledges and the honor of their Crown, and ignored Egypt's history, its capacity and traditions.—Yours, &c.,

ALY FAHMY KAMEL,  
Vice-President Egyptian Nationalist Party.

### THE GRÆCO-TURKISH CONFLICT.

SIR,—Having recently spent eight months (January 15th-September 16th last) in the area of the Græco-Turkish conflict, and nearly half this period in various districts of Anatolia at present under Greek occupation, I read with amazement Mr. T. P. O'Connor's encomium on the Greek administration there which has appeared in the columns of the "Times."

Phrases like "the truly astonishing improvement in all things which has come to the city (of Smyrna) since the establishment there of the Greek Government" make me rub my eyes. Economic improvement, for instance? The trade of Smyrna is dead. Or improvement in order? When I revisited Smyrna in August I could not visit my chief Turkish friend in his own house for fear of compromising him, and he did not venture to come to my hotel. In the country it is far worse. The interior of the Greek occupied area is terrorized by bands of Christian "chettis" (brigands whose profession is not economic but political), who raid the Turkish villages and plunder, burn, and kill. Who organizes them? On May 24th and 25th, I myself saw the Greek military commandant at Yalova, on the Marmora coast, co-operating with their leaders; and if Mr. O'Connor examines the report of the Inter-Allied Commission of Inquiry into atrocities in this and neighboring districts (Cmd. 1478, 1921) and the report of the representative of the Geneva International Red Cross who accompanied them ("Revue internationale de la Croix-Rouge," 3me année, July 15th, 1921), he will find that one chetti leader had his headquarters in the same town (Gemlik) as the commander of the Greek Tenth Division, and that these investigators categorically implicate the Greek military authorities in the outrages that have been committed. I know something about Turkish atrocities, having edited, under Lord Bryce's direction, the British Government's Blue Book on the Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire in 1915 (Miscellaneous 31, 1916). What I have seen and learnt this year in the area of Greek occupation in Western Anatolia convinces me that the methods and objects of these Greek chettis are the same as those of the Turkish chettis in Central and Eastern Anatolia in 1915, and that their relation to the Greek authorities is the same as that of those Turkish chettis to the then Committee of Union and Progress administration. "Larger religious and racial tolerance" is really a ludicrous description of the treatment which the Turks of Western Anatolia have experienced since the Greek landing in May, 1919.

Compared with the massacre, the "blessings" conferred by the Greek administration at Smyrna in the spheres of education and hygiene are a trifling affliction. Yet Mr. O'Connor might have appreciated them better if he had visited the new overflow prison in the Rue Maltaise, or had inquired into the requisitioning of the Turkish Sultaniyah secondary school.

Of course, the record of Turkish atrocities is a vital fact in the Near Eastern situation, but it is only so in so far as the parallel record of Greek atrocities is equally taken into account. By ignoring the one, the Christian friends of the Greeks invite the Moslem friends of the Turks to

ignore the other, and we get no nearer to a settlement or an understanding.—Yours, &c.,

ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE.

[Professor of Byzantine and Modern Greek Language, Literature, and History in the University of London, King's College, and Special Correspondent of the "Manchester Guardian" in Greece and Turkey, January to September, 1921.]

November 18th, 1921.

SIR,—It is disappointing to find in THE NATION AND THE ATHENÆUM for November 19th a suggestion that the Greek occupation of Smyrna and, apparently, a portion of its hinterland can be justified on the ground that the Greeks, according to their own account, have brought a number of ploughs, taken measures against typhus, and so on. Why, sir, this is the same old story which is always told to justify the forcible seizure of another nation's territory; our own occupation of Egypt for forty years, in violation of our solemn pledges, is frequently justified on similar grounds, i.e., the improvement effected by us in the material prosperity of the inhabitants.

The Greek occupation of Smyrna rests on no basis of international right whatever, for, even if it can be reconciled with the Treaty of Sèvres, this Treaty, having never been ratified, has in Mr. George's words been "scrapped." The same, of course, is true of the so-called "Mandates" in Mesopotamia, Syria, and Palestine—the whole arrangement is an "expression of violence" and *force majeure*, and nothing else.

Where, again, can we even find a proof that the majority of the Smyrniotes desire Greek rule? Quite apart from the Moslem inhabitants, do the Jews desire it, or the other Christians in the city? Why did the Greeks turn down the *plébiscite* which the Kemalists were ready to accept?

Lastly, these statements about the blessings of Greek rule in Asia Minor must be set side by side with such things as the suppressed Report of the Allied admirals on the Greek descent upon Smyrna, the more recent Report of Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Toynbee, and that of the International Red Cross Commission, which paint a hideous picture of arson, loot, outrage, and murder, carried out by these champions of Hellenic civilization in Anatolia.

E. N. BENNETT.

Reform Club, S.W.

November 25th, 1921.

[The comment which Captain Bennett makes on our reference to the Greek occupation of Smyrna has no such implications as he draws from it. It was mentioned as an item on the credit side of the Greek operations. THE NATION AND THE ATHENÆUM has not omitted to deal with the debit side.—Ed.]

### LA DÉMOCRATIE NOUVELLE.

SIR,—From December 4th to the 11th, 1921, "La Démocratie Nouvelle," 34, Boulevard Raspail, Paris, VII., will hold its first Democratic and International Congress at Paris. Representatives of many nations will attend, including those of Belgium, Austria, Italy, Germany, Lithuania, and Hungary.

M. Alfred Schneyder, President, Association of Pacifist Students of Berlin;

M. J. Tiedge, delegate, Committee for the Rights of Minorities, Berlin;

Comm. Stefano Cavazzoni, Member of the Chamber of Deputies, Italy;

M. Chabrun, Député de la Mayenne, Vice-President Commission du Travail;

M. J. Rodet, de l'Union des Patrons Sociaux de France; Mme. Malaterre-Sellier, Vice-President Women's Section League of Nations Union (France),

are among those who will be present.

The subjects of discussion will be:—

December 5th.—Democratic and Pacifist Organizations in Various Countries.



December 6th.—The Organization of Democracy.

December 7th.—Education and Democracy.

December 8th.—Political Organization of Democracy.

December 9th.—Moral Conditions of Democracy.

December 10th.—The League of Nations and the League of Peoples.

These subjects will be dealt with in detail by committees, under such headings as:—

- (a) Social Legislation in France and elsewhere.
- (b) Gambling, Drink, and Prostitution.
- (c) Religion and Democracy—Religious Peace.
- (d) Education, obligatory—adult and professional.
- (e) Proportional Representation.
- (f) Disarmament.
- (g) The Press.

"La Démocratie Nouvelle" is an organization whose influence is steadily growing in France. Its leader and prime mover is M. Marc Sangnier, the well-known deputy for Paris, whose name has long been identified with progressive movements. Its propaganda is based on the broadest principles of democracy, on religion, education, and a profound belief in constructive peace. It is non-sectarian. It publishes two periodicals—"La Démocratie Nouvelle" and "La Jeune République."

This Congress is the first of its kind to be held in Paris since the war, and I therefore ask for the hospitality of your columns in order that all your readers who love France—great and generous France—and who so deeply regret her lapse from her former freedom of spirit, may be heartened at hearing of this organization and its Congress, and may testify their interest, either by their presence or by letters of sympathy.

The French nation, like the English, is not entirely composed of "hard-faced men." I shall be happy to give any information or assistance within my power.—Yours, &c.,

ARTHUR FITCH.

12, Falkner Square, Liverpool.

### THE OPEN DOOR IN CHINA.

SIR,—In view of the correspondence in your paper with regard to the Open Door in China, it is not difficult to indicate exactly what China means by this. I may summarize the points briefly:—

1. No international control of China.
2. No international receivership or financial control.
3. No Entente of the Powers with regard to China, unless China is included.
4. No recognition of Japan's need for expansion in China's territory, and of her claims in Manchuria and Mongolia.
5. No external aggression or encroachment.
6. Freedom of development.
7. Fair treatment.
8. Complete abolition of all spheres of influence and equality of commercial opportunity for all Powers.

The view of your leader-writer with respect to Mr. Hughes's strategy is quite sound. There is the risk that he may have to make large concessions in other matters in the effort to carry out his Naval Programme. In other words, China runs the risk that her interests will be sacrificed on this occasion just as they were by President Wilson at Versailles.

China has always held the view that the discussion over the Pacific and Far Eastern problems must precede the Conference on Disarmament, since the alternative policy is simply placing the cart before the horse. Her view is, unfortunately for her, very likely to prove right.—Yours, &c.,

CHARLES WATNEY,

London Correspondent of the "North China Herald."

### THE CLOUDBERRY.

SIR,—Your contributor Mary Webb rightly extols the wimberry, perhaps justly places it first in the list of wild fruits, but robs another delicious mountain berry of its

only name in order to give one more to this already over-named fruit, calling the wimberry cloudberry. The wimberry grows almost anywhere on the mountain side and down to very near the sea level, but cloudberry, *Rubus Chamamorus*, is really a darling of the clouds, only appearing when you have reached such heights as the top of Kinder Scout or Pen-y-ghent. Here it gladdens the eye with its rose-like bloom or refreshes the climber with its orange-red fruit. I have never heard the wimberry called cloudberry before. It might receive the name where *Chamamorus* does not grow, but it certainly does not deserve it where cloudberry blossoms above its highest range.—Yours, &c.,

G. G. DESMOND.

Sheepscombe, Stroud, Glos.

[Baron Leijonhufvud also writes to this effect.—  
ED. THE NATION AND THE ATHENÆUM.]

### A COMPLIMENT.

SIR,—I do not know in what light the editor of a paper like yours looks upon its readers, nor how much their commendation encourages it to persevere in its task of reforming public opinion, but I would like to assure you of the very great appreciation of at least one of them of such articles as that which appeared in your issue of September 17th entitled "The Conscience of Science." It was, in my opinion, the high-water-mark of economics as well as of Christianity.—Yours, &c.,

G. FALCONER.

1, St John Street, Montreal.

November 12th, 1921.

## Poetry.

### SIMICHIDAS IN THE MOUNTAINS.

His mind is softly vacant like the sky;  
As though in his benign, lack-lustre eye  
The winnowed mist that chills the high blue air  
Found welcome entrance, and descended there.  
Beside his careless feet the springy grass  
Peeps boldly in the still lake's faded glass,  
Stirred only by the little frogs who dive  
Before his random footsteps for their life.  
Just as their plunges ripple to the sedge,  
The sequent echoes ripple to the edge  
And faintly wave the fringes of his mind.  
He stops and vaguely smiles and tries to find  
Cause of the quiet tumult; finding none,  
He smiles again and keeps his journey on  
Over the swelling turf, yet turns aside,  
Like a blunt sea-barge edging up the tide,  
To distant specks of white, which never are  
The mushrooms he imagined them afar.  
Deceitful toadstools! But his stick on high  
Swerves from its errand and glides harmless by.  
He strikes no more, but smiles and wanders on  
To where the green horizon plunges down  
Through silver spaces to the hidden Rhone.  
Watching the slant ray of the autumn sun  
Lovingly fumble at the veil of mist  
Masking the valley that may not be kissed  
Till spring unties her girdle, there he stands,  
Stares in a dream at the mysterious lands,  
Mountains of vapor, seas of drifting foam,  
The cincture and the everlasting home  
Of the unsleeping star which guided him  
Unknowing to the faint world's drowsy brim.

J. MIDDLETON MURRY.

## The Week in the City.

(BY OUR CITY EDITOR.)

THURSDAY.

It is a hopeful sign that the big problems of international finance, inextricably interwoven as they are with international politics, are claiming a prominent share of the attention of the business community and the general public. Some recent contributions to the discussion of these questions are practical, some the reverse; but all serve, at least, this purpose, that the more clearly the separate threads are shown up, the easier should be the statesmen's task of disentanglement. German reparations, inter-Allied debts, and disarmament are three interlocking questions. Dealing with the first two, Mr. Vanderlip this week has said (1) that no one outside France believes the full reparations bill can be paid—which is a fairly true estimate; (2) that America should transfer from herself to "humanity" such of the debts of her European associates as can be paid. America, however, is not ready for such a financial *beau geste* as Mr. Vanderlip suggests. She is, quite naturally, loth to remit debts to, or sink money in, Europe so long as quarrels and warlike preparations persist. In the American view disarmament is the guarantee of good faith that must precede debt arrangement. But France not only pleads the German peril as a reason precluding disarmament, but is also driven by her budgetary position to demand the impossible—namely, the full stipulated pound of flesh from Germany. The threads of the interweaving problems are so tangled that the task of unravelling them calls for the highest statesmanship. Can Mr. Lloyd George (if Ireland lets him go to the Conference) redeem his failure of Versailles and help America to argue through to the goal of world salvation?

The attitude of the business community here towards reparations is becoming more clearly defined. The Federation of Industries last week produced a memorandum which made several interesting suggestions. But the real significance of the document was its implied recognition (1) that the receipt of reparations was not so important as to save British industry from dislocation; (2) that, if reparations cannot be obtained by innocuous means, then some modifications should be made on certain stringent conditions, e.g., that Germany should balance her budget. If France would only accept the judgment of the world's experts, that to press blindly is to court disaster, then the way would begin to open to conferences on the whole wide international problem with some hopes of settlement. Surely it should not be beyond the power of statesmanship to find a formula of agreement and accommodation (on subjects vitally affecting each country) between America, who is France's creditor and ours, Britain, who is the creditor of France and Germany, and France, who is the creditor of Germany and debtor to America and Britain. The task should be made easier by taking into conference what one may call the ultimate debtor. News that France's Washington policy is being modified, and the rumor that Downing Street is toying with the idea of a two years' moratorium for Germany, may perhaps be taken as signs that things are beginning to move in the right direction. But until these great international problems are on their way to settlement, the financial and industrial horizon will remain heavily clouded.

### GOVERNMENT INVESTMENTS.

Before the war the Government's investments in registered companies were limited to two concerns—the Suez Canal and Cunard Steamship. A White Paper just issued gives a long list of additions made during the war. The column showing "amount invested on September 30th, 1921," contains the following items: Suez Canal, £4,050,000, Cunard £2,600,020, Anglo-Persian Oil, £5,200,000, British Dyestuffs Corporation, £1,700,001, Turkish Petroleum Co., £40,000, British America Nickel Corporation (of Canada), £629,618, Munster Flax Development Co., £33,000, Monmouth Shipbuilding Co., £490,000, Standard Shipbuilding and Engineering Co., Edward Finck & Co. and Chepstow Property Co., £656,250, Home-Grown Sugar, £375,000, Flax Cultivation, £331,000, Wessex Flax Factories, £36,000,

British Cellulose and Chemical Manufacturing Co., £1,450,000, the Commercial Bank of Siberia, £1,198,371. If all these investments had redounded to the national interest to the same extent as the famous Suez Canal deal, there would be no critics. But the failures of some of the ventures listed above have been so depressing that one hopes that this and future Governments will be very chary indeed of venturing forth into the field of industrial investment.

### NEW TREASURY BONDS.

In the week ended November 26th, sales of Treasury Bonds only brought in £3,720,000 to the national exchequer. But, in spite of this, a slight reduction was effected in the total of the floating debt. Notice was given last Friday that the present series of Treasury Bonds would be withdrawn to-day and a new issue substituted. This announcement gave rise to a decided rush for the Bonds, and large sales are likely to be shown in the next revenue return. Large receipts from this source will assist the Treasury to meet the obligation to pay out about £50 millions of interest on War Loan which falls due to-day. The terms of the new series of Treasury Bonds were announced last night.

The Bonds as before will carry interest at the rate of 5½ per cent., but the issue price is raised to 99. Conversion rights attaching to the old series are removed, and the maturity date is advanced to May, 1930. The terms fulfil expectation and should evoke a very good response from wise investors.

### THE STOCK MARKETS.

Business in the stock markets this week has proceeded on quiet lines, without developing any striking deviation from recent tendencies. Gilt-edged markets continue to be the bright spot. The volume of business passing is such as to allow brokers and jobbers plenty of time to discuss the future of Stock Exchange policy. Twelve months after the official date of peace the Treasury regulations will come to an end. Those twelve months are passing by, and in the meanwhile it has to be decided under what system dealing will in the future take place. The Committee has invited and has received expressions of opinion from groups of members. Some favor the retention of the system of cash dealings, with facilities for contango operations extended to clients as margin, according to New York practice. Others advocate the restoration of fortnightly settlements. The Committee has promised to produce its plans in March. Whatever these plans may be, they must be expected to provide reasonable opportunity for speculation; for without such opportunities the freedom of markets and the volume of business are severely restricted, and for obvious reasons it is desirable that the London market should be as free as possible.

### THREE BIG COMPANY REPORTS

This week has seen the publication of the annual reports and accounts of the P. & O., Messrs. J. & P. Coats, and De Beers. The P. & O. accounts are much better than was feared after the announcement of a decrease in the distribution. Net profits, after providing for depreciation and paying debenture interest, were £571,466 against £657,376 a year ago. Considering trade conditions the result is satisfactory, but the directors utter the warning that recent voyages have resulted in serious losses. In the year ended June 30th last Messrs. J. & P. Coats, the great sewing cotton concern, practically halved their net profits, those for 1920-21 being £2,072,449, against £4,164,894 in the previous year. In order to distribute dividends at last year's rate the directors draw upon the dividend reserve fund to the extent of £250,000. The report of De Beers Consolidated Mines reflects the stagnation of the diamond trade. Sales of diamonds dwindled from £6,750,000 to £2,300,000. But on the whole shareholders may be thankful for the degree of success with which the company is weathering the troubles of the present time, recovery from which depends mainly upon general trade revival.

L. J. R.





# THE ATHENÆUM

No. 4779.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1921.



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## The World of Books.

THAT dingy building in Jermyn Street where stones and bones are kept, the Museum of Practical Geology, has its use; not a few humorists ought to be grateful to it for prompting them to describe to their readers the funny character of the duller place in London. And there is no doubt that its deserted galleries, seen in the murk of a December afternoon, are indeed a peep into the mystery of the past, which is silent, being dead. The chance visitor, naturally a little scared of geology, a word which is much bleaker than botany, gazes with awe into the dusk where nothing moves, sees some symbolical urns, some monoliths, some mural and spectral bones, and tip-toes out, holding his hat reverently. That's enough for him. It might be a cemetery just before closing time. He does not know that the urns are there merely to show him the beauty of fluor spar; that the monoliths are part of the core of a boring for water for the supply of a London brewery, and bear many significant hints about the underworld of the Tottenham Court Road; and that the bones may be truly the half-obliterated portraits of his ancestors. He does not guess. There is nobody to give him a word. He is unaware that a few steps would take him to the most delicious show of color in London, not excepting the milliners' shops and the National Gallery: the gems and minerals in the cases of the first floor. I shall always be grateful to the late F. W. Rudler, who was curator of this museum, and a naturalist whose bright enthusiasm put its contents, for me, in a light which could always disperse the murk of the duller of London days.

\* \* \*

I AM reminded of the place by a new book by Dr. J. W. Gregory, "The Rift Valleys and Geology of East Africa" (Seeley & Service, 32s.), which has been sent to me. Goodness knows who will read it, except, of course, the initiated; they would read anything by Dr. Gregory. But others might find it tough and sapless, and a dubiety about recommending it for general reading makes me feel that, of all the sciences, geology is the one with which the curiosity of the young should be first aroused. It is plainly the central door. It is the natural beginning. We may afterwards become botanists, archaeologists, zoologists, astronomers, agriculturalists, chemists, and physicists when the preferences

grow, and then the development will have been in the proper order. If children were taught at school no science but geology, preparation would be made for any other science, and at least there would be a right apprehension of themselves and their locality in time and space. The real trouble with geology is that it diminishes the sense of personal importance. One's vanity becomes smaller and smaller as one reads on. How pleasant it would be if it were usual for politicians to find recreation in the work of such as Dr. Gregory! Without knowing it, the casual visitor, in whom move awe and a little fear because of one peep into the dingy interior in Jermyn Street, has got well his first lesson in geology.

\* \* \*

THE words geologists use among themselves certainly seem cabalistic. You skim over the surface of this volume on East African earth-lore, and are interrupted by stuff such as orthophyric-phonolitic-trachyte, rhyolite, and spherulitic basalt, and learn that of something or other "columella well developed and compact, united to the septa of the first two cycles"; and hear, of course, as in Bret Harte's verse, of Eocene, Miocene, Pliocene, and Pleistocene. There are references to what is Eozoic, Archeozoic, and so on, up to Kainozoic. You are assumed to know that the Permian and the Trias indicate an important difference which no self-respecting man would overlook. Yet after years of forgetfulness I find these curious signs still form mental images for me, so that after all it is not too much to expect that what is new and strange in Dr. Gregory's book could be brought, with a little care, within the circuit of the general reader.

\* \* \*

AND then how much he would gain! That Rift Valley, shaped by this globe in one of its movements which are sometimes so vast, and take so much time, that the ephemera never notice them, is, as geological affairs go, fairly recent. It can be traced from north of the Jordan Valley almost through the length of Africa; and, incidentally, it shows in many books of travel, for its unusual landscape has surprised a large company of explorers and tourists. The profound disturbance which formed it accounts, among other memorable landmarks, for the Alps, Lake Tanganyika, Mount Everest, and Sodom and Gomorrah. This new folding of the rind of the globe began when we were crawling over it as quite insignificant lemuroid items full of a praiseworthy dislike for the many cold-blooded monsters about us; and it continued—dropping a continent to the bottom of the Indian Ocean, and thereby forming problems for the lemur to puzzle over when it began to study, as a zoologist at Oxford, the life of Madagascar, the East Indies, and South America—right up to the time when the well-developed wickedness of the cities of the plain required fire to cleanse it. By then we were really higher than the apes. And still to-day, in East Africa, the volcanic fires which consumed Gomorrah continue to burn. It is characteristic of the superior little lemur that, in the fine opinion of himself he developed, he should assume not only that geological phenomena were designed for the benefit of his national flags, but that even his wickedness is so important that once it made the earth turn in its sleep.

H. M. T.

## Reviews.

### A GREAT RADICAL.

**Life of the First Marquis of Ripon.** By LUCIEN WOLF.  
Two volumes. (Murray. £22s. net.)

THERE was nothing subtle, or brilliant, or profound about Lord Ripon's intellect, and yet nobody can read his biography without seeing that he served his country better, more wisely, and more constantly than many statesmen who have possessed one or all of these qualities. His character grows on you steadily as you follow his career. He was a very straight, direct, and honorable man, resembling in the texture of his judgment his close friend and ally, Campbell-Bannerman. The management of his friendships and his personal relations throws a useful sidelight on a politician's capacity for his career. Some men carry personal loyalty to a point at which it conflicts with public duty; others show in their treatment of friends or associates a want of principle, of stability, of disinterestedness, which sooner or later demoralizes their political conduct. Ripon's bearing in his dealings with men was almost always admirable. One exception is noted in these pages: Lytton certainly had some ground of complaint over Ripon's behavior to him on his arrival in India. But that one instance of petty feeling—it was not very serious—was quite out of keeping with Ripon's usual manner.

Let the reader turn to the letters that Ripon wrote in moments of critical or delicate controversy with others if he wants to see what kind of man he was. They are not written in a brilliant or seductive style, and it is possible that Hartington had sometimes an excuse, when Indian Secretary, for yawning over the Viceroy's dispatches, but they are in every line the utterances of an independent, straightforward mind; they are models of good taste, and they show, above all, that there was nothing petty in his nature. The Duke of Cambridge wrote him an angry letter when he began to reform the Indian Army. "I am not ready," he says in the course of his admirable answer, "if your Royal Highness will pardon me for saying so, to be a consenting party to taxing the people of the country, who are a very poor people, merely to save the pockets of the richer taxpayers at home." In 1888 his old friend Tom Hughes, who had gone to pieces over Ireland, wrote two intemperate letters to Ripon because Ripon had agreed to address a Home Rule meeting in Dewsbury at a time when a Co-operative Congress was sitting there. "My dear Tom," replied Ripon, "I have received your two letters. You are a bad diplomatist, and the needlessly aggravating tone in which you wrote tempted me grievously to go on with my meeting and see you farther first. But it is no use being angry with an old friend, and so I have got my friends in Dewsbury to postpone the meeting."

Perhaps the most interesting letters on the personal side were those that passed between Gladstone and Ripon on the occasion of Ripon's religious conversion. If they show Ripon at his best, they show Gladstone at his worst, and it is difficult to defend Gladstone from the charge of want of chivalry and want of candor. Ripon's religious revolution exposed him to a storm of abuse and misrepresentation which, in these days, it is difficult to understand. It was when this storm was raging that Gladstone published an article in the "Contemporary Review," in which he included what seemed an unmistakable allusion to the conversion of a Liberal who had lately been his colleague: "No man can become her (Rome's) convert without renouncing his moral and mental freedom, and placing his civil loyalty and duty at the mercy of another." Gladstone was not quite sophist enough to take the poisoned sting out of this sentence. Ripon's religious conversion is described in these volumes by Father Bowden. Perhaps the most interesting thing about it was the absolute peace that it brought to Ripon's mind in India, at the time when many men would have been distracted by their public anxieties. It is curious to contrast with the calm that Ripon found in this anchorage the tormenting scruples and

introspections from which his contemporary, Shaftesbury, suffered at the hands of his religion all his life. One thing more must be said about Ripon's personal relationships. For a long time he hated "Pam"; ultimately he served under him and admired him. There was a time when he distrusted Gladstone; at the end of his life he was devoted to him. The explanation is simple. He formed his estimate of other men not from their behavior to him, but from their public conduct, and if he found reason on fuller experience to think better of a statesman, he acted on his judgment and discarded his earlier prepossessions or prejudices. That is not too common a practice.

Ripon had qualities of which we like to think that they are essentially English, but this is not to say that he was in any sense a conventional man. Like Campbell-Bannerman, he was never at an English public school, and like Campbell-Bannerman, he was singularly unafraid of the displeasure of the social world in which he lived. The course of his career shows how unconventional he was. There have been many men, as unlike each other as Cobbett and Gladstone, who have started on the right and ended on the left. There have been many, as unlike each other as Burdett and Chamberlain, who have started on the left and ended on the right. Ripon steered a course of his own, for he started on the extreme left as a Radical; then, as his first impressions were corrected by a fuller experience of the difficulties of public life, he became a Whig, doubtful about any Reform and definitely hostile to County Franchise. Then, when by all the laws of political evolution he ought to have become a Tory, he became a Radical, indefatigable in the Home Rule crusade, and an intrepid opponent of the Boer War. Almost his last letter is written on the question of the expected resistance of the House of Lords to the Land Budget, and about that he writes to Lord Crewe: "My opinion is so decided that I should be prepared for what would be regarded as violent measures in the case of their attempting to enforce a claim of that kind." This is not a bad spirit for a man over eighty, the heir of convention, mediocrity, and wealth, who, forty years earlier, had resigned office because he disapproved of County Franchise.

Thus, if in one aspect Ripon might seem a commonplace man, without other distinctions than that of a highly honorable character, in another he was original, self-determining, keeping his own color and complexion whatever the enveloping influences of the time. This he was as a youth; this he was as an old man. He began as a Christian Socialist, ardent for co-operation and workmen's control in industry, and hating the gospel of the Industrial Revolution. Some of the ideas with which he was associated were taught by a group of Churchmen, of whom F. D. Maurice was the most eminent. Ripon, taking his own line, declared passionately for democracy, and put a reasoned statement of his faith—a faith that he had acquired partly by study, partly by contact with the idealists of '48 abroad—into the form of a pamphlet called "The Duty of the Age." Maurice was violently upset, upbraided Ripon vehemently, and wrote a memorandum attacking democracy, and describing Ripon's views as treason to the cause of God. Ripon, then aged twenty-four, took the breeze with the composure with which he faced the tempest that swept over him when he was Viceroy thirty years later.

The great event of Ripon's life was, of course, his career as Viceroy. He was in the House of Commons, with a brief interruption, from 1852 to 1859, when he succeeded to his father's seat in the Lords. He held office as Under-Secretary for War, Under-Secretary for India, Secretary for War, and Secretary for India. In the great Reform Government of 1868 he was President of the Council, and in 1871 he acted, with conspicuous success, as chief British representative on the Commission which settled the dispute over the Alabama. He was an ardent supporter of the Crimean War, and developed a great interest in military organization, in which he made something of a mark. His opinions became more and more cautious and Whig, and in 1880 he was for Hartington and against Gladstone as leader. Then he was sent to India as Viceroy, and his second Radical phase began.

His Indian reforms are one of the decisive chapters in our history, and Mr. Wolf gives a full account of them. One cannot help being struck by the readiness of many of the India Civil Service to accept the daring Liberalism that



Ripon introduced into Indian public life. Some of his chief reforms in the development of local government and finance went through with little difficulty. The great outburst came, of course, from the planters, lawyers, and men of business, who were affronted by the Ilbert Bill giving magistrates the power to try Europeans in certain cases. The idea that Ripon was a headstrong Don Quixote who plunged into trouble is finally discredited by Mr. Wolf's pages. It is probable that the Bill would have been drafted on more modest lines if Hartington had not forgotten to send Ripon a minute, drawn up by Sir Henry Maine, recommending a more careful advance. The record of these four years is full of honor for the Viceroy himself, and for the able men who served him on his Council. Ripon returned, as he put it, "more Radical than ever." "The effect of despotic power," he wrote to Forster, "has been to strengthen and deepen my Liberal convictions."

These convictions were soon put to a test which was too severe for some of his oldest friends. Many who had thought Ripon a poor Liberal on the Suffrage controversy fell out of the ranks on Home Rule. Ripon threw himself zealously into the Irish agitation, and when a similar issue arose over the Boer War he followed his natural Liberal sympathies. On Ireland and on South Africa his help and his name counted for a great deal. It is clear from the letters now published that Campbell-Bannerman consulted him at every point in the African controversy, and the two men were in the closest sympathy. His judgment proved to be far better than that of Lord Grey and the other Liberal Imperialists. Chamberlain tried to entangle Ripon, and published an extract from a secret dispatch sent by Ripon to Sir Henry Loch in 1893, which, as is made quite clear in Mr. Wolf's pages, gave a totally misleading idea of the character of the dispatch as a whole. Ripon never held as Minister, any more than he held afterwards, that England had any right to go to war over the Outlander question. Ripon and Campbell-Bannerman were in close agreement both about diplomacy and the conduct of the war. Ripon would have preferred a split to a policy of silence on the part of the Opposition. "I am nervous," he wrote to Campbell-Bannerman in July, 1901, "about a return to the *status quo ante*. We can work together on the understanding that we differ freely as to the origin of the war and the diplomacy which preceded its outbreak, but if we are not to have any policy as a Party about 'methods of barbarism,' the illegal acts of the Cape Parliament, the suspension of the Cape Constitution, the terms of settlement . . . we shall forfeit our position as a great National Party and become ridiculous. A split will be better than that." He was, of course, as firm as Campbell-Bannerman against dropping Home Rule when Rosebery pressed for it.

The closing incidents of his life were characteristic. He resigned office over the discreditable incident of the Protestant outburst against the proposed procession of the Blessed Sacrament through the streets of London. Technically this procession was illegal, and the Protestant clamor became so furious that the Prime Minister asked Lord Ripon to use his influence with the Archbishop to secure the abandonment of the proposal. Ripon complied and resigned. His letter of resignation is admirable and characteristic. Not less characteristic was his decision to keep the reason of his resignation secret, at the cost of his personal comfort, rather than embarrass his late colleagues.

### MIDDLE ENGLISH.

**The Middle Ages in the Lineage of English Poetry.** By Sir ISRAEL GOLLANCZ. (Harrap. 2s. 6d. net.)

**Pearl.** Edited, with Modern Rendering, by Sir ISRAEL GOLLANCZ. (Chatto & Windus. 7s. 6d. net.)

**Fourteenth-Century Verse and Prose.** Edited by KENNETH SISAM. (Oxford: Clarendon Press. 7s. 6d. net.)

It is, as a recent correspondent pointed out, generally held to be the privilege of journalists to poke fun at professors, or even to be downright angry with them. Alas! it is a superstition. Professors are much less polite to each other than we are to them. Listen to Sir Israel Gollancz

on the subject of Middle English and Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch:—

"The 'Vision of Piers Plowman' cannot with any appreciation of the facts be regarded as 'the last dying spasm' of Anglo-Saxon literature, as Sir A. Quiller-Couch, University Professor of English Literature at Cambridge, futilely, in my opinion, attempts to demonstrate, in his zeal to maintain the worthlessness of Middle English poetry save that of Chaucer in the lineage of English literature. 'I shall not attempt to convince you,' he states, 'that Chaucer did not inherit any secret from Cædmon or Cynewulf.' As though, forsooth, it were necessary, at this time of day, to prove what no sane person would for a moment contest."

If we may take that as a fair sample of the way professors behave to one another, the journalist may claim for his motto, "Toujours la politesse."

We have a sneaking suspicion that the Professor of English at King's College does not regard the Professor of English at Cambridge as an *echt Herr Professor*. For "Q.," as we all know and rejoice to know, was once a journalist. Indeed, in the far distant days when the less venerable part of this journal was "The Speaker," he used to contribute a weekly article not unlike—save in merit—this of mine. "Q.," no doubt, in his unregenerate days, himself laid about the professors; and we cannot help feeling that Sir Israel Gollancz would have handled his colleague with more decorum, had it not been for an unconscious memory of his dubious origins.

However, the point at issue is not professorial politeness, but Middle English. Sir Israel Gollancz thinks a great deal of it. It would, indeed, be a tragedy if the distinguished and painstaking editor of "Pearl" did not. But Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, on the other hand, thinks very little of it. That would seem to be a straight fight; and all we have to do is to see that there is a fair field and no favor. But the appearance is deceptive. Sir Israel and Sir Arthur are not talking about quite the same thing. Sir Arthur is discussing the absolute literary value of Middle English; Sir Israel is defending its place "in the lineage of English poetry," in other words, its historical significance. And both are, in the main, right. The absolute literary value of Middle English is pretty small; its historical significance indubitable. But historical significance is an elastic notion, and in his lecture Sir Israel seems to stretch it rather too far. It is perpetually on the brink of passing into literary significance; and then it begins to distort Sir Israel's vision. He is anxious to prove that the native Anglo-Saxon strain is very important in the evolution of English poetry, and he does it by arguing, first, that Spenser is the chief representative of the great Elizabethan period, and, second, that the chief formative influence in Spenser was the revived alliterative poetry of the fourteenth century. The first of these propositions strikes one as wrong-headed; the second as extremely dubious: and when Sir Israel goes on to find a partial explanation of the romantic revival of the nineteenth century in the same influence, we feel we are being taken into fairyland indeed. Strangely enough, Sir Israel seems to know nothing of the work of the one contemporary poet who might have supplied his strange theory with an apparent basis of fact. One of the few writers of genius we possess to-day, Mr. Charles Doughty, does actually write Anglo-Saxon alliterative poetry; and, what is more, he has deliberately gone back to Spenser for his model and inspiration. "Of Edmund my lodestar," he says in his last poem, "my ditty is." Mr. Doughty is the true Phoenix of Arabia. The last one was burned to ashes before he arose, and it would need a bold man to maintain that he was a proof of the living continuity of the Anglo-Saxon tradition in English poetry. Then, of course, there is Wilfred Owen's alliteration and assonance. But why should we make Sir Israel's case out for him?

With the assertion of our general agreement with Sir Arthur that the influence of Anglo-Saxon upon the development of English poetry has been practically negligible, we may pass from this aspect of Middle English. We admit without hesitation that it is a valuable, even an invaluable, historical document. Are our rather plentiful remains of Middle English really much more than that? Here we come into direct conflict with Sir Israel, who holds, for instance, that "Pearl" is a great poem. "Pearl" is a strange, and sometimes beautiful poem; but it is very

far from being a great one. Compared to any poem of Chaucer's, it is artificial in a thoroughly bad sense. It is a marvellous achievement in a technique that a great poet would refuse to submit himself to. There is a point—and French poetry had reached it by the time that "Pearl" was written—at which the extreme stringency of form becomes a stifling convention. The twelve-line stanza on three rhymes was difficult enough; but when to this was added the carrying on of the last line through each group of six stanzas, and alliteration in every line, the writing of poetry became an elaborate conjuring trick. It is, indeed, astonishing that the author of "Pearl" could manage to carry forward his narrative at all; and no one would care to deny him a touch of genius. His poem is not dull; but it is sometimes hopelessly obscure, sometimes empty. It was inevitable. The only way he could possibly secure his rhymes and his alliterations was to use forgotten words, or words which were meaningless. When the poet of "Piers Plowman" was compelled by his alliteration to write, in place of "Matthew said,"

"Matthew with mannes face mouthed thise wordis,"

it is not in the least surprising that a poet, who had to satisfy the demands of a more stringent form than the sonnet in addition, should often be found saying nothing. The marvel is that he managed to say anything at all. Some of his straightforward verses are exquisite. Listen, for instance, to Pearl speaking to her father:—

"A blissful life thou says I lead;  
Thou wouldest know thereof the stage.  
Thou wost well when thy Perle con schede,  
I was full young and tender of age;  
But my Lord the Lomb, through his God-hede,  
He took myself to his maryage,  
Coround me queen in bliss to brede (i.e., rejoice)  
In length of dayes that ever shall wage.  
And seised in all his heritage  
His lef [bride] is; I am wholly his;  
His praise, his price, and his parage  
Is root and ground of all my bliss."

"Pearl" is, in parts, a beautiful poem; the crowded stiffness of its ornament, the very obscurity of its strange, vague words, seem to convey the quality of cultivated medieval mysticism. But it does not hold an important place in the lineage of English poetry. With all its alliteration it is far less truly English than "Troilus and Cressida," which has none. It belongs to the mystical poetry of Europe; it contains a spirit which hovered vaguely above the minds of many nations, but was never made concrete in the consciousness of any one. Sir Israel Gollancz has done such an invaluable work in explaining and annotating the poem that it seems ungrateful to refuse his estimate of its value; and we are almost ashamed to say that we are nothing like so certain as he is that "Gawayne and the Green Knight" was written by the same poet, or that "Pearl" itself is the expression of a personal grief, so that his exercise in imaginary biography leaves us cold.

For those who wish to make a general acquaintance with Middle English no more excellent book could have been devised than Mr. Sisam's careful anthology. It is designed to show Middle English at its best, and it does. The passage from Robert Manning's "Handlyng Synne" with which it opens is alluring, and "Sir Orfeo," which follows, is entirely delightful, irresistible even:—

"Bifel so in the comessing of May,  
When miri and hot is the day,  
And oway beth winter-schours,  
And every field is full of flours,  
And blozme breme on everi bough,  
Overal wexeth miri anough,  
This ich quen, Dame Eurodis,  
Took two maidens of priis,  
And went in an undrentide  
To play by an orchard side,  
To see the floures sprede and spring  
And to hear the foules sing . . ."

You may, or may not, recognize Eurydice in Dame Eurodis, who retains more of her native semblance than does "Thraciens," which becomes Winchester. And the poet, most charmingly, gives the tale a happy ending. Orpheus regains Eurydice. It is a lovely fairy-tale; but it does not, like the Middle English of Sir Israel Gollancz's theory,

preserve a strain different from Chaucer's. On the contrary, it points directly forward to him.

On the whole, there is singularly little of "the Anglo-Saxon element" in Mr. Sisam's characteristic anthology. The robust prose of Wiclif, his virile handling of the theme "The fiend casteth to damn the world and the priests for letting to preach the gospel by these four: by feigned contemplacioun, by song, by Salisbury use and by worldly business of priests," is just English, not Anglo-Saxon or European. And the same is true of the most beautiful things in the anthology: they are the songs, if we may speak metaphorically, of a new-born nation, not of an old surviving one. The ethereal lightness of "Nou sprinkes the sprai" is not in the least Anglo-Saxon:—

"Son icche herde that mirie note  
Thider I drogh;  
I fond her in an herber swot  
Under a bough  
With joie enough.  
Son I asked: 'Thou mirie mai  
Hwi sinkestou ai?'  
Nou sprinkes the sprai,  
All for love icche am so seek  
That slepen I ne mai."

"Sumer is icomen in" and "Alison" are familiar to readers of the "Oxford Book of English Verse." But "The Virgin's Song," the most perfect thing in Mr. Sisam's book, is probably new to most people:—

"Jesu, swete sone dere!  
On porful bed list thou here,  
And that me greveth sore;  
For thi cradel is ase a bere,  
Oxe and asse beth thy fere:  
Wepe ich mai therefore.  
"Jesu, swete, beo noth wroth,  
Tho ich nabbe clout ne cloth  
The on for to fold,  
The on to folde ne to wrappe,  
For ich nabbe clout ne lappe:  
Bot ley thou thi fet to my pappe,  
And wite the from the colde."

That song, like the few others, seems to have come down to us wholly by accident. They seem to indicate that the gift of pure lyricism was born straight out of the mingling of two cultures. The poetry of the Anglo-Saxon alliterative revival has nothing to compare with the simplicity of true poetic intensity. Middle English of this kind, and the Middle English of "Sir Orfeo" and Wiclif, stand in the direct line of English literature. But, alas! there is so little of it remaining that even when the study of English literature has become our sole humanity, Middle English will still be the province of the specialist and the philologist. It has hardly sufficient sustenance for the lover of literature.

J. MIDDLETON MURRY.

## BYWAYS OF CAIRO.

**Some Cairo Mosques and their Founders.** By Mrs. R. L. DEVONSHIRE. (Constable. 17s. 6d. net.)

BEFORE the war, few English readers can have been interested in the mosques of Cairo. To all those who knew them their charm was evident enough, but a visit to Egypt was only possible to the wealthy traveller. Now, however, the public to whom Mrs. Devonshire makes her second appeal is a large one. Hundreds of thousands of ordinary Englishmen in khaki wandered through the old streets and bazaars of Cairo during brief respites from the desert campaigns in Sinai, or from the rigors of warfare in the bleak Judean hills. To most of them there was an attraction that they could not always define about this wonderful city, but some of them were too wearied of the East as they knew it to appreciate its glamor as the more fortunate civilian tourist may.

It is a curious fact that Cairo on a wet day, when the sun is hidden by clouds, loses half its attraction. The picturesque bazaars become gloomy and filthy alleys, the mosques appear shabby and unkempt under such conditions. But as rain appears only once or twice a year, it seldom interferes with one's enjoyment of the architectural master-



pieces of the Mamelukes. Their delicate ornament is clearly defined, their pierced parapets stand out sharply silhouetted against the deep blue of the sky, and one does not need to be an expert to appreciate their beauty.

In her earlier work, "Rambles in Cairo," Mrs. Devonshire collected a number of articles previously published in a local paper, and written in the form of letters from an imaginary wounded soldier, one of the many parties whom she had actually conducted round the chief Saracenic buildings of the city. This method of treatment, though it met its purpose, was of necessity slight. It did not admit of much more than a cursory glance at the most familiar examples, but yet included an account of several mosques and old houses that the normal visitor seldom sees. Also it was accompanied by a really valuable plan showing the situation of every important monument in the central part of the city, as well as by a chronological table giving the dates of erection.

The mosques of Ibn Tulun, El Hakim, El Azhar, El Aqmar, El Guyushy, Ez Zaher Beybars, En Nasser, Qalaun, Barquq (*intra muros* and *extra muros*), Qaitbay *extra muros*, El Muayyad, Sultan Hasan, and El Ghury have been frequently described in the standard works on the subject. They are the largest and, on the whole, the most important of the 359 buildings in Cairo that are cared for by the *Comité* in Egypt. But one of the remarkable features of medieval architecture is the extraordinary number of its examples, and among those little known to the casual traveller there are several hardly inferior to the old favorites. It is with some of these that Mrs. Devonshire is concerned in her new book. No longer fettered by the necessity of putting simple words in the mouth of an imaginary soldier, she writes readably of the stirring history connected with the various buildings.

She draws freely from the early Arab historians, whose bloodthirsty chronicles of intrigue and murder are already familiar to those who know the books of Professor Lane-Poole. She recounts the amazing adventures of Queen Shagarat ed Durr, and traces the careers of the various ambitious Emirs whose mosques and tombs remain to us to-day.

The first four chapters deal with four buildings of the period 1160-1250. In 1160 the Fatimids were still in power; in 1250 the first of the long line of Mamelukes ascended the throne of Egypt. The intervening years, though so little of their architecture is preserved, are therefore of great importance as linking two very different building epochs. Of early Mameluke buildings Mrs. Devonshire describes the two beautiful mosques of Zein ed Din Yusuf and of Sangar el Gawly, both famous for their architecture and their ornament. A valuable study follows of the reign of Qaitbay (1468-96, the most prolific and splendid of architectural periods in Cairo). The last two chapters deal respectively with the mosques of Khairbek and of Malika Safiya, the latter a building of the seventeenth century quite foreign to the local tradition.

The book does not contain much that is fresh to serious students of medieval Cairo, but it presents historical information about each of these minor mosques in a readable form. The author adds architectural descriptions that are the more valuable as being up-to-date, in many cases giving recent news of the restoration work carried out by the *Comité*. A small plan would have added to the value of each description, but the photographic illustrations, mostly reproduced from Captain Creswell's fine negatives, leave nothing to be desired. It was, however, strange to select, as frontispiece for a book on Cairo, a plate of Qaitbay's *sebil* in the Haram at Jerusalem.

In matters of detail there are few criticisms to be made. The system of transliteration of Arabic adopted by the author does not quite comply with that of the British Academy, and once more the need for international standardization is shown. In writing of the ancient city of Gaza (now so lamentably famous in the annals of the British Army) as "Ghazza," the author is surely straining a point. On page 109 there is a reference to a footnote that does not exist, and there are a few other minor slips.

But, on the other hand, the book abounds with useful hints to the tourist. The beauty of the porches in the mosques of Beybars II. and of Khairbek is noted. There is

an acute comment on the "strange mixture of piety and indifference which is characteristic of Cairo Moslems" in regard to their old buildings. And on page 89 a footnote encourages us to look forward to Mrs. Devonshire's next work, a translation of a fifteenth-century Arab book of travels in Palestine and Syria.

#### SIR FRANCIS PALGRAVE'S HISTORIES.

**The History of the Anglo-Saxons: The Rise and Development of the English Commonwealth (Anglo-Saxon Period).** By Sir FRANCIS PALGRAVE, K.H. Edited by his Son, Sir R. H. INGLIS PALGRAVE, F.R.S. In three volumes. (Cambridge University Press. 42s. net each.)

IN the preface to his first volume, addressed in letter form to Miss Anna Gurney, Sir Francis Palgrave quotes Dr. Johnson: "Books that you may carry to the fire, and hold readily in your hand, are the most useful of all. A man will often look at them, and be tempted to go on, when he would have been frightened at books of a larger size or a more erudite appearance." An external view of these three volumes, covering some eighteen hundred thick pages, disposes us to regard the quotation as of closer application to them than the author intended, an impression corrected once we are well inside them. They are, indeed, a masterpiece of compression. The third volume is in the nature of a gigantic appendix of nine hundred pages, containing extracts from original documents, English and Latin, upon the administration of justice before the King, the history of the dispute between the Bishop of Chichester and the Abbot of Battle, the forms of civil proceedings, the King's Highways, the Teutonic tribunals, the mode of assembling the Folkmoot of the Hundred, the procedure of oaths and compurgation, warranty, frankpledge, battle trials (in which women sometimes took part), Assizes, Norman juries, Icelandic courts, &c., examples of the writs of Norman kings and Anglo-Saxon charters, the forms of vassalage, land and beneficiary tenure and fealty, the legislation of the States composing the Frankish Empire, and the like. These originals comprise but a fraction of the sources consulted by the author, who covers the whole vast landscape of Saxon and Norman history.

The first volume, which is a social and historical account of the Anglo-Saxons, uncompromised by the judicial intricacies involved in tracing the development of the Constitution in Volume II., will be much the most interesting to the general reader. The narrative takes one comfortably, and with many stops for sightseeing, from B.C. 50 to the Battle of Hastings. Sightseeing is perhaps the right word, since the author, for all his erudition and ingrained conservatism, does not hesitate to introduce digressions, episodes, tales, and many human and pictorial touches sternly repudiated by the academic historian, but which are just the elements which make us feel we are reading about our own living ancestors. Thus the stories of Rowena, of Dunstan, of Alfred, and so on, are all set forth in full, and with an imperturbable gravity, as though they were as germane (as indeed they are) to the narrative as the subjugation of the Celto-Brits. It is due to false Puritanism on the part of historians that the anecdote of Gregory and the young Angles is only known in a mutilated form. Palgrave gives it, as it should be given, leading as it did to the conversion of the islanders, in its entirety:—

"To what nation do these poor boys belong?" was the question which Gregory asked of the dealer. "They are Angles, Father." "Well may they be so called, for they are as comely as angels, and would that, like angels, they might become cherubim in Heaven! But from which of the many provinces of Britain do they come?" "From Deira, Father." "Indeed," continued Gregory, speaking Latin, "De ira Dei liberandi sunt." And when, on asking the name of their King, he was told it was Ella, or Alla, he added that *Allelujah* ought to be sung in his dominions."

These and oral records like them are the informal literature of a people, and as important in their way for deciphering the garbled text of its soul as the most elaborate exposition of the decay of learning after the Danish invasions, successful, like those of Jutes, Picts, Saxons, and Celts, through internal dissensions rather than by force of arms.

The second volume is on a different scale, analyzing the component elements of the Commonwealth. The author

discards chronological sequence, and develops his themes of the outlines of English jurisprudence, the origins of our ancient tribunals, and the growth of political from legal institutions by means of a grouping of subjects bearing upon them. Though the evolution of our laws has not kept pace with the general amelioration of the political constitution, our lawgivers have worked upon the principle that the value of any form of government depends upon the protection which, through the law, it affords to the individual. Laws result from the state of the people, and the political constitution from the machinery employed to execute the law. We think, however, that Palgrave was encouraged to an ultra-conservatism in some of his judgments by the very slowness and orderliness of expansion from the roots of this general principle. There were so many successive invasions of England by kinsmen that the changes in policy and legal emendation were much fewer than we should expect. Anglo-Saxon laws were practically unchanged between the Conquest and the reign of Henry II., who introduced trial by jury, and even so revolutionary an imposition as the Feudal system represented a compromise between the doctrines of hereditary right and regal responsibility—in itself the foundation of the modern constitution. Evolution from precedent to precedent—one of many kinds—is also one which cuts both ways. The Anglo-Saxon *were*, for instance, is equivalent to the modern system of damages—those very damages which make our divorce laws so gross and inhuman by assessing human beings as property valued at so much, like insured furniture. Palgrave was led by this tardiness of growth and by an excessive insistence upon the influence of Roman law upon the States of Western Christendom to see it as something admirable in itself, whereas it is often the reverse. But this error in Palgrave's estimate does not destroy the essential sanity and justness of attitude which, joined to his wealth of learning and power of exposition, produced this remarkable history.

### Books in Brief.

**A History of the Cambridge University Press, 1521-1921.** By S. C. ROBERTS. (Cambridge University Press. 17s. 6d. net.)

THE Press was on its mettle, and very naturally, when it undertook the task of presenting Mr. Roberts's commemorative survey of its four centuries. The result is an extraordinarily eye-pleasing book, enriched with many illustrations, in itself ample justification for the four-hundredth anniversary of the Press. Many of the reproduced examples of the skill of older printers would, we fear, read the majority of us a useful lesson in humility. Mr. Roberts has provided a plain tale of the more important books that the Press has produced, together with an account of the chief personalities who have guided its destinies. Perhaps the best known of the earlier names is that of John Baskerville, whose ambition was "to print an Octavo Common Prayer Book, and a Folio Bible." On December 15th, 1758, he obtained leave from the University to print two Prayer Books and one Bible, and by putting his ambition into practice Baskerville succeeded at once in producing some of the world's most beautiful books, and in bringing himself to the verge of ruin. "My folio Bible is pretty far advanced at Cambridge, which will cost me near £2,000, all hired at 5 p. Cent. If this does not sell, I shall be obliged to sacrifice a small Patrimony which brings me in [£74] a Year to this Business of printing; which I am heartily tired of, and repent I ever attempted." The Bible was not a commercial success, and Baskerville printed no more at Cambridge. It is curious to compare eighteenth-century complaints of the University's meanness touching mathematical types—"they used daggers turned sideways for *plus's*"—with a tribute paid to the Press in 1918, "which in setting up over five hundred quarto pages of numerical tables has allowed less than a dozen printer's errors to pass its proof-readers, and has, in addition, frequently queried our own mistakes." The book was Professor E. W. Brown's "Tables for the Motions of the Moon."

**Days and Ways of an Old Bohemian.** By Major FITZROY GARDNER. (Murray. 16s. net.)

MAJOR GARDNER writes about Bohemia—and other places—but, though he should know what Bohemia is, he is mistaken in regarding himself as a native. His way of life has been much too varied and unconventional for the narrow Bohemian, who is always careful to preserve his careless appearance and could never, at the age of sixty, be passed into the Army by a medical board. Major Gardner is just himself, an adventurous and entertaining character. He knows the world from England to America and Japan and back again. His rule of life, he says, was never to remain in any sort of employment, however remunerative, "after finding we did not suit one another, or that the associations were distasteful." He has been an officer in the Law Courts, a journalist, a theatre manager, and a soldier, and in each capacity has enjoyed himself thoroughly. He has something to say of the play by Joseph Chamberlain, which is frequently referred to, but of which few people seem to have any knowledge. Major Gardner read it at the request of Tree, to whom it was submitted. Chamberlain did not wish it to be known that he had written a play which was not thought good enough to be produced. Major Gardner's opinion is that "it failed in dramatic, but by no means in literary interest. While there was not quite sufficient 'action' in the plot, the dialogue and characterization were brilliant—in parts equal to those of Oscar Wilde. The opening scene was on the Terrace of the House of Commons at tea-time. The intricacies and intrigues of party politics provided the theme. The title was 'The Politicians.'"

**Yorkshiresmen of the Restoration.** By J. S. FLETCHER. (Allen & Unwin. 10s. 6d. net.)

MR. FLETCHER is a strong Yorkshire patriot. So large a subject as his county can provide a writer with occupation for life. Mr. Fletcher utilizes his opportunity, and having a lively style of narration can be relied upon for a readable volume. Here are short studies of notable Yorkshiresmen of the latter half of the seventeenth century—of Nathan Drake, whose diary, kept during the siege of Pontefract Castle, 1644-5, has become famous; Sir Henry Slingsby, an implacable Royalist who was prominent in all the Yorkshire fighting and was executed in 1658; the third Lord Fairfax, who, according to the epitaph in the churchyard at Bolton-on-Swale, died after a life of good works at the age of 169; Sir Thomas Gascoigne, who in 1680 was tried and acquitted on an accusation of high treason made by some villains of the Titus Oates breed; Sir John Reresby, who left memoirs of the court of Charles II.; Archbishop Tillotson; the Marquess of Halifax; Oliver Heywood, of whom Mr. Fletcher thinks that, more than Milton, Marvell, or Bunyan, he represents those who went out of the Church of England in the early days of the Restoration; Peter Hodgson, of the Scarborough Quaker community; Abraham de la Pryme; and Obadiah Walker, whom Mr. Fletcher defends against the vigorous denunciation by Macaulay for changing his religious opinions.

### From the Publishers' Table.

OUR weekly anthology announcement concerns "Poems of the Dance," which Mr. Edward R. Dickson has compiled and Mr. Knopf will publish. The poets apparently began to consider the subject in 1590 B.C., and they have not disposed of it yet. We hope Mr. Dickson has paid due attention to the "Daunce of the Seven Deadly Sins," the sun on Easter morning, the planets, and other really distinguished dancers. It is, indeed, a most plentiful and fortunate field for the gatherer. (We wish we could gather, for lower ends, a few true first editions of Byron's "Waltz: an Apostrophic Hymn," amusingly annotated in recent numbers of the "Villager.")

DANCING in England, despite all your Russians, isn't what it was. The villages now, for example, may set forth



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the rules and regulations at select classes, but where is Mopsus to address Marina as once?—

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Like a Mermaid on the seas;  
And I think, you there will find  
Store of straines to please your mind:  
Roundelaies,  
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Cogs, and Rongs, and Peggie Ramsy;  
*Spaniletto*,  
*The Venitto*,  
*John come kis me, Wilson's fancie*."

Truly a merry medicine for melancholy.

MINDS that are best pleased with retrospect may turn with pleasure to an old-fashioned "Chapbook" of poetry for children, just published at the Pear Tree Press, Flansham, Sussex, adorned with simple decorations in color, which, as well as the verses, convey a straightforward enjoyment in the work of making them.

THE waters will soon be troubled by Mr. Osbert Sitwell, who is to launch a sort of Shelleyan bottle filled with knowledge for those who want to know the truth about "the new poetry." Whatever else his manifesto contains, it is certain to have some cheerful pessimism. We look forward to "Who Killed Cock Robin?" Messrs. C. W. Daniel are the publishers.

COLLECTORS of nineteenth-century autographs should not overlook a new catalogue from Messrs. Thorp, of Guildford, who have brought to light several large albums of correspondence from miscellaneous celebrities. Simultaneously comes the catalogue of the St. Martin's Lane branch (or stem?), which begins with a very loud bang on the drum, the first edition of "Pierce Plowman" from Eastwell Park, almost unique; and goes on with lesser but quite resonant drum-taps. Here we see a copy of the curious book in which the anti-Shakespeare theory first defined itself. "The Life and Adventures of Common Sense," 1769 (£35), says plainly that Shakespeare stole his plays.

MESSRS. BIRRELL & GARNETT, at 19, Taviton Street, have set forth in their second catalogue a list of W. H. Hudson's first editions, for which (twenty-five items) they ask £60. Almost two hundred items in French of varying but considerable rarity distinguish this lengthy list. We notice, too, the classified collections of Mr. W. H. Robinson, of Newcastle, said to be a fair ground for bookmen. His fourth catalogue is admirably clear (would satisfy perhaps the classification-promoter who has been writing to the "Publishers' Circular"), and boasts a fine copy of "Odes by Mr. Gray," the Strawberry Hill production.

THE Blake Society proposes to issue to its subscribers, at intervals, hitherto unpublished prints by William Blake. We have received "The Temptation of Christ," and "Newton," as examples. These reproductions are made by the colotype process in color, and alone cause the guinea subscription to the Society to look cheap.

## The Drama.

### THE POETS' DRAMATIST.

SOME years ago (in 1913), writing on Tchekov's plays, I said:—

"Every weakness has its kind of strength, and when Nietzsche wrote that he found the 'power to exercise will' strongest in the Russian Empire, he meant the undeveloped, latent will of a horde of half-barbaric peoples. But this mass-will is not the force which impresses the student of Russian literature. Rather he is struck by a certain delicate, highly wrought, even over-nurtured quality of sympathy, not at all suggestive of a race meet for great action in the spheres of war or politics. The Russian writers will not have our coarse finish, our short views and made moralities. Neither

their novels of experience nor their plays of temperament are built that way. They join issues with the slightest tracery of 'plot,' but with a close lacework of feeling, through which one discerns the power of the distressed and dispirited personality that we English are wont to associate with the character of Hamlet. The Russian, in his turn, associates it with his country's misfortunes, with the failure of all the Russian revolutions, and the heavy drain of noble types that generations of exile have involved. So much of his literature is sad. It shows people in low spirits, idealists at twenty, disillusioned at thirty, much too old at forty—a race not easy to comfort and dying young. They are curiously fascinating, these sensitive creatures, whose ennui is so much more a spiritual dissatisfaction than the shallow boredom of our gilded youth."—NATION, Jan. 14th, 1913.

Since these words were written we have had the war—a more supreme example of the will-lessness of civilized man than the shiftless company of "Uncle Vanya" or "The Cherry Orchard." And of the two reactions from it—the two great reassertions of the will to live—the greater has occurred in Tchekov's Russia. Some at least of these dead have awakened; and in their futile, tremulous souls, or in some kindred ones, a new hardness has been born. The spiritually unemployed have done something at last which, be it good or evil, the world is not likely to forget. Vanya himself, should he be still in the land of the half-alive, has, indeed, no longer an estate to look after. But I imagine that Dr. Astrov has conquered his taste for vodka, has quite forgotten Elena, and is now "functioning" as a member of the Tcheka or an active Kommissar in the rural administration of the Bolsheviks. It is rather we who feel these decaying folk of the countryside to be of our own poor relationship; and listen to the death sentence they pronounce on their lives as a forecast of the moral surrender, the faint-hearted debility, of the inmates of our "Heart-break House."

Nevertheless, for the time in which they were written, "Uncle Vanya" and Tchekov's companion plays must needs seem works of true prophecy, echoes from a sick-chamber which has since become the mortuary of many a dead soul. The irreclaimables among these tired, idle, terribly subjective people, drifting half-drowned down the stream, have at last reached the rapids and gone over. I see that Mr. Walkley, who presumably lived through the Great War, still finds how impossible, how non-existent, these characters of Tchekov are. But for most of us their connection with the catastrophe of Russia and of civilization, is one proof more, if any were needed, that the divining power remains vested in the artist who can think clear and feel deep. Tchekov was no *pocourante* of the critical, do-nothing school. He was an Astrov of the best; a practical reformer, who saw the listlessness and inefficiency round him through the medium of his own strong and eminently helpful nature. But, like all the great Russians, he was a poet, a deeply sympathetic artist, devoted not to the detached observation of things, but to concentrated vision of the life of man. Therefore it is that in Tchekov's plays you are at once conscious of what is called "atmosphere." Much of his work is excellent comedy of manners; but its true character is that of spiritual tragedy, spiritually discerned and presented. All that happens on his stage is some crisis or another of the soul's life; and a touch or two opens the door to a sight of years of travail, turned at last into crowning moments of anguish or bewilderment. We know not only what Sonia and Vanya are as the result of their futile labors on Serebryakov's estate, but how they became so. It is a pitiful vision of men and women, for these people, unlike Mr. Shaw's voluble patients, are extremely unvoiced; a sigh, a gesture, a fit of tears or of railing passion, seem to be their chief means of expression. We look to anything happening to them. They may die, kill each other, go mad, or merely, like Sonia, go on enduring. But whatever occurs on the exterior side of their living, we are most of all aware that within there is



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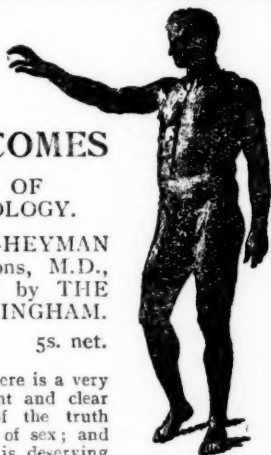
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a profound, a will-destroying helplessness. For this reason a peculiar significance attaches to what may be called the *accompaniment* of the Tchehov play; so that a clap of thunder, or a few notes on the guitar or the piano, yield an emotional effect out of all proportion to their significance in the development of its action. Most musical, most melancholy, is the strain of all his dramatic work. He is the poets' dramatist, the dreamers' poet.

"Uncle Vanya" is, in this respect, a finer example of Tchehov's art than "The Cherry Orchard," as it is a less finished and purposive comedy. The society of "The Cherry Orchard" goes physically and visibly to pieces; and a glimpse of a new and more robust social and economic order comes into play. But in "Uncle Vanya" the ghostly caravan merely flits on to a fresh halting-place, where none of its inmates can hope to find rest. The professor will live on his property; Elena will die on it; the greater parasites and the less will eat it up; and Sonia will care for them, having herself ceased to care. No British playwright would content himself with so sparse a use of the properties of his calling; or would feel happy if he left such a mass of unconcluded story lying about. But that is the Tchehov "technique." The soul-stuff having all been displayed, and its delicate affinities and repulsions brought to light, the imaginative hearer may make of them what he will. Nothing more is required.

It is clear that such work as this should be in the hands of a Russian producer, and Mr. Komisarjevsky's treatment of it in the Stage Society's production at the Court, save for the length of the intervals, seemed to me to leave little to be desired. The acting was extremely good: all of it perhaps (except Miss Rathbone's Sonia) a little coarser than it should have been. That is to say Mr. Dyll's doctor was rather too Britishly drunk; Mr. Quartermaine's Vanya rather too briskly declamatory; and Miss Nesbitt's Elena just a thought too physically seductive. I noticed that the angels were cut out of Sonia's beautiful closing soliloquy, for a reason that I cannot guess. They are a clear suggestion from the music of the guitar, their ministration a closing ray of ironic tenderness, thrown on the lot of the lonely girl.

H. W. M.

## Music.

### BACK TO CIMAROSA ?

In a new German literary and artistic monthly entitled "Faust," the first number of which has just appeared (Berlin, Julius Bard), there is an interesting article by Ferruccio Busoni on the theory of opera. It is intended as a sort of prefatory note to the forthcoming opera on the Faust legend, the libretto of which was discussed in THE ATHENÆUM for December 17th, 1920. Written primarily for a German public, this essay takes a defensive attitude against prejudices which are current in Germany, but of less terrifying importance to English readers. It seems strange that in the land of Mozart and Wagner it should be necessary to stand up for opera as a legitimate form of musical art. Busoni has suffered much from old-fashioned German criticism. Apparently there still exists in Germany the feeling that opera as a musical form is not quite respectable. Serious musicians compose symphonies. In England we have far fewer opportunities of hearing opera than the Germans enjoy, but we have no prejudice against it.

Probably the awkwardness of Busoni's position resides in the fact that he offends both parties in Germany: he proclaims opera as the highest form of musical art, and in the same breath expresses his disapproval of Wagner and all his followers. Yet even here he is by no means alone. Most of the younger generation in Germany are in revolt against Wagner; indeed, there is

a strong anti-Wagnerian movement in England too. It is the inevitable consequence of the lapse of time. It is quite possible for those of us who went through the Wagner fever of a generation ago to go on enjoying the operas which we adored in our younger days, and at the same time to see the point of view of those newcomers who find Wagner old-fashioned and are convinced that they have nothing to learn from him. Wagner led a reaction against Bellini and Donizetti; Debussy and others have brought about a reaction against Wagner, and we are learning to appreciate in a new way the operas which the Wagnerians despised.

To Busoni Mozart is the ideal composer of opera. English readers will find nothing strange in that. In the first place, our English tradition of opera is still in the main Italian rather than German, in spite of the Wagner movement. Secondly, opera in England is less easy of access than in Germany, so that our audiences are more inclined to take it seriously. When Busoni holds up "The Magic Flute" as the ideal opera, he will find plenty of English opera-goers to agree with him. The old gang at Covent Garden have never shown much enthusiasm for it, but it is a very different state of things at the "Old Vic" and in the Isle of Dogs. Yet Busoni, in professing his devotion to "The Magic Flute," takes a German rather than an Italian point of view. The Italians have never had any feeling for mysticism in opera. They demand from the stage, as he says, life as they themselves live it, life as they see it in "Tosca" and "La Traviata." He goes on to point out how Verdi's instinctive feeling for real opera caused him to insert into "Otello" a number of purely musical scenes which are unnecessary to the drama. It was observed of Verdi's "Otello" a long time ago that it was not really an opera, but incidental music to a play. But it was a necessary stage in the history of opera; it was an attempt to show that an opera might be dramatic in the ordinary sense, that it was not necessary for a composer of operas to ruin any drama to which he chose to set music.

It was a dangerous experiment. Any composer who voluntarily takes up a secondary position in opera as compared with the librettist is denying his art. An opera is, first and foremost, a piece of music, and, as Busoni says, it must justify itself structurally as a piece of music, quite apart from the drama and the libretto, as honestly as any symphony. Here Mozart undoubtedly shows us the way. It cannot be denied that Wagner fulfils this condition too—fulfils it, indeed, almost too completely. One could imagine a Wagner opera played by the orchestra and acted by dumb singers; one would still have some conception of it as an artistic whole. With an opera of Verdi this would be impossible; on the other hand, a Verdi opera would still convey its meaning, even if the orchestra went on strike and left the singers to go through it unaccompanied. But what will be startling to many readers at the present day is Busoni's frank and honest assertion that an opera must of necessity be built up of separate musical numbers. He seems almost willing to go back to the days of Metastasio, to the alternation of *aria* and *recitativo secco*. The human mind, he maintains, can neither conceive nor appreciate a continuous composition that lasts three or four hours. The Wagnerian device of avoiding perfect cadences is a mere disguise. As we know quite well, the "Ring" itself contains a number of isolated items which we are accustomed to hear as concert-room extracts. It has been the error of most of the post-Wagnerians that they have tried to make their operas consist entirely of movements of this type, leaving their audiences no chance of relief and repose. Mozart in most of his operas groups together a number of movements into a continuous *finale*, but there are always breaks and quiet passages in which the mind can, as it were, take breath before it is strung up again to the height of emotion.

Busoni makes a vigorous protest against the modern operatic love-duet. It is the creation of the nineteenth century. To trace its origin is not easy. We can recognize it plainly enough in "Tristan," and obviously it is from "Tristan" that the modern German composers derive their inspiration. But it has an Italian ancestor as well, for Puccini is guilty of this indiscretion just as



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much as his German contemporaries. An indiscretion it is, in Busoni's view. There are no real love-duets in Mozart or Beethoven. To Beethoven the expression of sensual feeling on the stage would have been an abomination. Mozart simply laughs at it. The love-scenes in "Figaro," "Don Giovanni," and "Così fan tutte" are all comic and deliberately superficial. The relations of the lovers in "The Magic Flute" are on so high a spiritual plane that it never occurs to one to imagine that they feel anything that can be called sexual desire. It is, indeed, curious that audiences should take a delight in watching a prolonged love-scene set to music when they would find it intolerable in a spoken play. To Busoni it is the same thing as peeping through a keyhole at two persons who believe themselves to be alone. It is not that he has a prudish pretension that desire is non-existent, but he simply holds that it is not a subject which music can illustrate. To him, and to many other opera-goers, these erotic moments are possibly embarrassing and undoubtedly tedious. And he points out how carefully Goethe has avoided this difficulty in "Faust"; when Faust talks to Gretchen in the garden he does not speak of his desires, but only her daily life and her religion. When the real erotic moment comes, there are no words. Besides, whether a love-scene in opera is indecent or not, it is nearly always ridiculous as presented on the stage.

There is one vital question of opera which Busoni's article seems to evade—the relative importance of the voice and the orchestra. He is all for cutting down words to their shortest limits, and quite rightly, in so far as he desires to avoid the prolixities of an over-literary libretto. The libretto, he says, must leave room for the music to unfold itself at the moments of lyrical emotion. That is right enough; but the music of lyrical emotion must be the music of the human voice. Since Wagner, composers have tended more and more, especially in Germany, to become the slaves of the orchestra. It may be desirable to go back to Cimarosa and Rossini in the matter of musical form, but the important thing is that musicians should realize the emotional value of pure singing. Mozart's operas live because he accepted the principle of musical form as applied to vocal expression; his singers do not rebel against form, but demonstrate it. Hence the characters on the stage are doubly alive for us, because they are singing, and because they are singing music. The whole drama rests upon their shoulders, and that is one reason why a Mozart opera is so strenuous an undertaking. But it is useless for a modern composer to go back to old-fashioned forms. The problem before him is to adapt new forms to eternal principles.

EDWARD J. DENT.

## Science.

### ALCHEMY.

THERE is a passage in Plato which reads: "We see water condensing itself and becoming stone and earth; by splitting and dividing it becomes wind and air; an air inflamed becomes fire; fire condensed and extinguished takes again the form of air; air thickened changes into mist, and then runs as water; water forms earth and stone." The Platonic theory of matter, we are informed, is obscure; there is room for several interpretations. But the passage we have quoted certainly seems to suggest that matter may be transmuted. We may agree with the old commentator that he has Plato's authority for the statement that "since things cannot ever conserve a proper nature, none can venture to affirm that any one of them is such and such a thing, rather than something else." In any case, it is this interpretation which is of historic importance, for on this interpretation was founded the whole picturesque art and science of Alchemy. For the primary aim of the alchemists, the discovery of the Philosopher's Stone, assumed the possibility of the transmutation of matter, and the philosophy which made this possibility credible was

derived from the Greeks. These Platonic speculations, confused and obscure as they appear to us, have inspired one of the most fascinating chapters in the history of the growth of the scientific outlook. In his very interesting little book\* Dr. Mercer enables us to see that Alchemy, despite its element of charlatanry, its affiliations with mysticism and magic, the sometimes sordid motives of its genuine adepts, nevertheless prepared the way for modern chemistry and produced men who investigated the properties of matter in a truly disinterested and scientific spirit. The old alchemists had undertaken an impossible quest; their theory of matter was completely wrong, the object of their search illusory, but those centuries of ingenious and laborious toil were not wholly valueless; amongst the by-products are some solid additions to knowledge.

Although the alchemical theory of matter was wrong, it was not absurd; it is quite easy to place oneself at the alchemical point of view. Our conception of matter has been very gradually elaborated, and, indeed, even at the present day, it is probably only the man of science who has a perfectly clear idea of what he means by matter. It is quite easy, neglecting later knowledge, to see that the idea of the transmutation of matter is perfectly reasonable. Burning wood is changed into flame and a flaky ash; water turns into an air or into ice; decaying meat changes into maggots. One old experimenter placed a small plant in a vessel containing a known amount of earth. The plant grew and increased enormously in weight, yet the amount of earth in the vessel was practically the same as at the beginning. Nothing but water had been added. Was not this a clear proof that water was transmuted into the substance of the plant? The first alchemical assumption, then, was quite reasonable. The second is more subtle, but it is quite as plausible. It rests on the alchemical doctrine of qualities. Matter is made up of its qualities, that is, its hardness, its fluidity, its fixity, its color, and so on. Since matter is theoretically transmutable and since it is composed of its qualities, we see that the task for the alchemist was to change the qualities of one kind of matter into those of another kind. If we consider the qualities of gold and copper, for example, their colors, their ductility, and so on, we see that they are much more like one another than either is like lead. Comparatively slight alterations are necessary to transform copper into gold. Different substances can be arranged in a scale of resemblance to gold, the perfect substance. And, on the basis of our assumptions, there can be very little doubt that this order represents the actual order of evolution of the different substances. Since substances can grow, ever assuming less and less imperfect forms, it needs only a little imagination to see that they must have some kind of life. Again, generalizing from what we know of life, it follows, reasonably enough, that substances must have sex. There are male and female substances. And, having gone so far, it would show mere timidity to refuse to these living, sexual substances a moral nature. There are noble and base metals. And, finally, they resemble all other moral beings we know in having a body, soul, and spirit. Here is a very complete and interesting theory. It carries with it a host of sublime speculations; its possible connections with a grandiose mysticism are obvious.

As an example of the way in which the alchemical theory of matter lent itself to detailed exposition we may refer to the writings of Valentinus. Matter can be transmuted; that is to say, all the sensible qualities of a substance can be altered. But it is natural to suppose that there is something which persists through all these changes. This something must be incorporeal, an "Essence" which is distinct from the merely material part of matter. In the bodily part of matter there are, of course, the four well-known elements, earth, air, fire, water. Now from the relations between pairs of these elements arise the three Principles: fire acting on air produces Sulphur; air on water produces Mercury; water on earth produces Salt. These three substances, Sulphur, Mercury, Salt, are not the substances in

\* "Alchemy: Its Science and Romance." By the Right Rev. J. E. Mercer. (S.P.C.K. 9s. net.)



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common use; they are ideal substances, corresponding to the four philosophical elements from which they are compounded. Actual mercury, for instance, exhibits certain impurities which impair its perfection; the ideal substance is the inmost substance common to all metals. In its actual state it exhibits the fluidity of water, the volatility of air, and the grossness of earth. When these properties are stripped from it, we get the true "first metal." It is this ultimate refined substance which is the "Mercury of the Philosophers," or the "Philosopher's Stone." If this substance could be discovered the transmutation of all metals into gold could be accomplished. This substance was, in fact, several times discovered; it assumed many different forms, however, so that nearly every account of it is unlike every other. Its use in effecting transformations, also, required superhuman care, for the uniform failure to obtain gold could only be referred to subtle impurities in the transforming agent. Thus the alchemical philosophy is perfectly consistent and adequate to all theoretical demands. Its practical failure cannot be used to condemn its logic. The escape from the closed circle of alchemy was effected by denying its assumptions.

S.

## Exhibitions of the Week.

**Tate Gallery:** Paintings by the late J. D. INNES.

**Goupil Gallery:** Salon, 1921.

**Twenty-one Gallery:** Exhibition of Works by WALTER CRANE.

INNES, a brilliant and gifted young man, died of consumption in 1914, at the age of twenty-seven. Mr. Charles Aitken in arranging this exhibition has paid a deserved tribute to a very fragrant memory. Innes had done a good deal of work, but he had not yet gone very far, or penetrated very deeply into what was in his mind, and it is this immaturity that lends a touch of singular melancholy to this collection of pictures. Very often he seems on the point of breaking into some rich achievement; but he never quite reaches it, though he would probably soon have done so. He was under strong, though good, influences when he died, and with the failing of his strength, his later style became a little mechanical. The tumbled rocks and liquid evening skies of Wales and the Pyrenees had become rather a formula, though they contained an element of beauty that he had not really developed. His paintings of Southern France, in a free, impressionistic style, and his "sea piece," "Collioure," are a better indication of what his powers would have been than the more characteristic "Innes" manner. But all his work shows a vivid and picturesque imagination. His death was a great loss, and what he has left will not soon be forgotten.

The exhibition at the Goupil Gallery is of a bewildering variety, but it is certainly a very interesting and instructive collection of contemporary painting. There are two good Sickert interiors that should not be missed—"Baccarat No. 2" and "The Horsehair Sofa" (Nos. 74 and 75). Mr. Glyn Philpot's portrait, "Student with a Book" (No. 84), is a fine piece of work: but it has the chilliness of many of his portraits—a defect that seems to be due to the absence of any attempt at intellectual sympathy. This kind of penetration may take various forms and be used to various ends, e.g., by Whistler and by Sargent, but without it a portrait cannot live. Mr. Cecil Jameson exhibits this quality clearly enough in his charming "Souvenir of Italy" (No. 100). Modigliani's "Portrait de Jeune Femme" shows something or other, but in a very attenuated form, and it is very difficult to determine what it is. Modern French art, except the very best, is always "making a point," often quite a good one; but when it has been made the artist persists in making it so frequently that it quickly becomes tiresome, particularly if it was not an important point to begin with. Modigliani is no exception, though in his short life he undeniably got hold of something. André Derain's "Jenne Fille au Sourire" (No. 231) presupposes that any-

thing will do for London. Wyn George's two sketches, "From a Terrace, Kairuan," and "Cimetière Musulman" (Nos. 159 and 165), are interesting as showing the importance of contrivance in these little "arrangements of nature." They are very similar in treatment, but one is engaging and the other is dull. There are a great many charming pictures by greater and by lesser names; it is a show to look round with care.

The exhibition of Walter Crane's work at the Twenty-one Gallery is frankly disappointing. Crane worked in a great tradition, though it is now questionable whether it was a good one, and whether the eminent personalities who revived it did not lend artificial life to what really and rightly belonged to other times. Few others could use these materials. Beardsley's "Morte d'Arthur" drawings, for instance, were a failure. The weakness of this style in lesser hands is here only too apparent.

E. S.

## Forthcoming Meetings.

- Mon. 5. Royal Institution, 5.—General Meeting.  
British Academy (Royal Society's Rooms), 5.15.—  
"The Relations between Arabia and Israel in Pre-historic Times," Prof. D. S. Margoliouth.  
King's College, 5.30.—"The History of Austria-Hungary, 1526-1827," Lecture VII., Dr. R. W. Seton-Watson.  
King's College, 5.30.—"The Græco-Turkish Question," Lecture IX., Prof. A. J. Toynbee.  
University College, 5.30.—"The Literature of Science," Dr. A. Wolf.  
Aristotelian Society, 8.—"The Limitations of Knowledge," Prof. J. Johnstone.  
Essex Hall, 8.—"China and the Powers," Mr. Bertrand Russell.  
Royal Society of Arts, 8.—"Processes of Engraving and Etching," Lecture II., Prof. A. M. Hind.  
Royal Geographical Society, 8.30.—"A Recent Journey in Northern Labrador," Mr. G. M. Gathorne-Hardy.
- Tues. 6. Royal Society of Arts, 4.30.—"British Columbia: the Awakening of the Pacific," Mr. F. C. Wade.  
King's College, 5.30.—"The Modern Scientific Revolution: The New Psychology," Dr. H. Wildon Carr.  
King's College, 5.30.—"Russian History to Peter the Great," Lecture IX., Sir Bernard Pares.  
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Women's Engineering Society (26, George Street, Hanover Square), 6.15.—"Home-Produced Fuels for Commercial Motor Transport," Mr. T. Clarkson.
- Wed. 7. University College, 5.—"The Evolution of Man," Lecture III., Prof. G. Elliot Smith.  
British Academy (Royal Society's Rooms), 5.15.—  
"The Relations between Arabia and Israel in the Biblical Period," Prof. D. S. Margoliouth.  
Geological Society, 5.30.—"Jurassic Chronology," Section II., Part I., Messrs. S. S. Buckman and J. F. Jackson.  
King's College, 5.30.—"Minor Gothic Arts," Prof. P. Dearnley.  
University College, 5.30.—"The Kingdom of the Netherlands," Lecture III., Prof. Geyl.  
Industrial League (Caxton Hall), 8.—"Some Problems of Unemployment," Mr. J. Baker.  
Royal Society of Arts, 8.—"Literature and International Relations," M. Emile Cammaerts.
- Thurs. 8. Royal Society, 4.30.—"A Study of the Glow of Phosphorus," Lord Rayleigh; and other Papers.  
University College, 5.—"Customary Feudal Systems," Lecture VI., Prof. J. E. G. de Montmorency.  
Birkbeck College, 5.30.—"Modern Political Ideals," Lecture VI., Mr. C. Delisle Burns.  
King's College, 5.30.—"Milan and other Italian Cities," Mr. Halsey Ricardo.  
Chemical Society (Institution of Mechanical Engineers), 8.—"The Genesis of Ores," Prof. J. W. Gregory.
- Fri. 9. Association of Economic Biologists (Imperial College of Science), 2.30.—Discussion on "The Resistance of the Plant Surface to the Entry of Pathogenic Organisms."  
Japan Society (20, Hanover Square), 5.—"The Potters and Pottery of Satsuma," Mr. W. L. Schwartz.  
University College, 8.—"Our Knowledge of the Real World," Lecture VI., Prof. G. Dawes Hicks.



